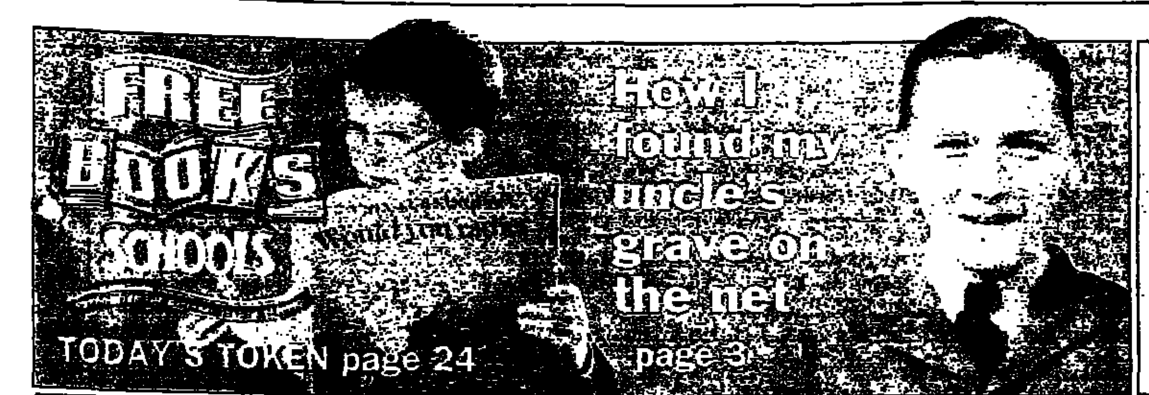
THE TIMES

DIEU ET MON DROIT

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TOMORROW IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

KATE WINSLET Sex, drugs and weight loss



The SIMPSONS new comic strip

30p EVERY WEEKDAY

More turmoil at the Express, *media times* page 37

Mandelson offered role in S Africa



Mandelson: his friends are urging him to take the job

By Roland Watson
Political Correspondent

PETER Mandelson was on course last night to make a dramatic return to his role as election strategist by travelling to South Africa and working for a smooth transition to Nelson Mandela's successor.

The job would see the former Trade Secretary acting as special adviser to the African National Congress, helping ensure the party's return to power and the election of Thabo Mbeki as president.

Mr Mandelson's name was mentioned for the role when Tony Blair met Mr Mbeki in Pretoria during his three-day trip to South Africa earler this month. The MP for Hartlepool, who resigned from the Cabinet before Christmas over his £373,000 home loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster General, is being strongly urged by some friends to take the job. Although he is interested in the role, Mr Mandelson has yet to commit himself to it.

One downside is that the three-month election campaign in South Africa clashes with a series of critical elections in Britain. A firm date will be set next month for the South African poll, but it is expected to be in May, or June at the latest. At that time, Labour will be involved in campaigns for the Scottish parliament, Welsh assembly, local elections in large parts of the country and the European parliament.

Labour chiefs anxious to give Mr Mandelson a quiet rehabilitation away from the limelight are at pains to keep him at arms-length from the public face of the party's campaign. But as the man who masterminded the tactics for Labour's May 1997 General Election landslide, he will inevitably be called upon in an advisory role.

Another downside is that spending eight weeks or more in the South African sun would not square with what some of his friends see as Mr Mandelson's best route back to office, namely toiling away on the "rubber chicken circuit" as a backbench MP for Hartlepool.

The offer of the South African job dates back to before Christmas when political staff from the South African Embassy in London visited Downing Street to talk about the possibility. Mr Blair, who wants to foster closer links with the ANC as a way of developing "third way" policies, encouraged the idea.

Following his pre-Christmas resignation and given his background in elecion campaigning, Mr Mandelson's name became the obvious front-runner. Despite his reservations, senior Labour figures expect him to spend at least part of the campaign for South Africa's second democratic election in Cape Town. Mr Mandelson's ties with African go back to when he spent a year in Tanzania before going to Oxford.

Labour MPs would almost certainly welcome the post. They were angered by Mr Blair's decision to keep Mr Mandelson on as his "personal representative" in talks with Gerhard Schröder's German administration and believe Mr Mandelson should serve a period of "quarantine" before trying to stage a political comeback. A purely political role, particularly working for such a long-cherished left-wing cause as the ANC, would be likely to go down favourably on Labour's backbenches. Earlier this week Mr Mandelson's involvement in the Anglo-German talks was downgraded to head off a rebellion by Labour MPs.

In a separate development, the cross-party standards and privileges committee is expecting to hear from the new Parliamentary Commissioner Elizabeth Firkin next month on whether she believes Mr Mandeslon broke parliamentary rules by failing to declare his loan from Mr Robinson in the MPs' register of interests.

GPs defy Dobson's Viagra rationing

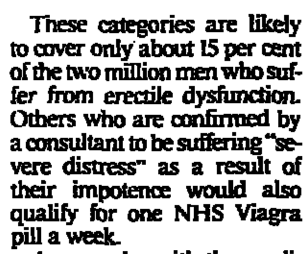
By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

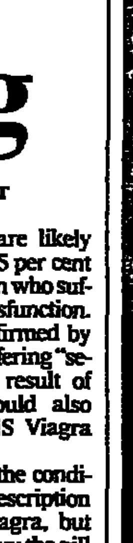
DOCTORS were yesterday [urg]ed to prescribe Viagra free[ly] over the next six weeks be[fore] the Government can im[pose] rationing of the anti-impo[tence] drug.

[In] defiance of Frank Dob[son's] intention to curtail pre[scripti]ons from March, the [British] Medical Association [said i]mpotent men going to [their G]P should be able re[ceive th]e anti-impotence pill [on the N]HS.

[The Go]vernment's plans to [ration th]e drug were de[nounc]ed by the BMA as cruel [and u]nethical within minutes [of be]ing announced by the [Heal]th Secretary.

[M]r Dobson wants to limit NHS prescriptions for Via[gra] to men suffering from spe[cific] conditions. These are [tho]se who have had prostate [ope]rations or radical pelvic [sur]gery and those suffering [fro]m spinal injuries, diabetes, [m]ultiple or single gene neuro[l]ogical disease.





'[M]ight just [as w]ell swallow [a] Smartie'

[Dr] Thomas Stuttaford, page 6

[L]eading article, page 23

These categories are likely to cover only about 15 per cent of the two million men who suffer from erectile dysfunction. Others who are confirmed by a consultant to be suffering "severe distress" as a result of their impotence would also qualify for one NHS Viagra pill a week.

Anyone else with the condition could get a prescription from his GP for Viagra, but would then have to buy the pill privately from the chemist for about £6 each.

Mr Dobson announced his plan on the day that the BMA had issued a warning it would instruct members to start prescribing the drug if no guidelines were received from the Health Department.

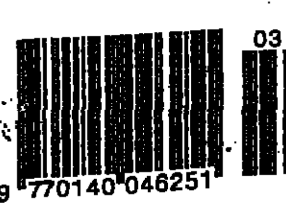
He was advised on November 9 by the Senior Medical Advisory Committee that there were no medical reasons why the drug could not be prescribed on the NHS by GPs. He was also advised by the committee to consider the priority that should be given to all methoids of treating the condition relative to treatments for other conditions. It took Mr Dobson two and a half months to do this and he decided that the only way out is to ration treatment.

His decision was solely based on cost. "The cost of treating impotence could escalate," he said. "We have to find a sensible balance between treating men with a distressing condition and protecting the resources of the NHS to deal with other patients — for example, people with cancer, heart disease and mental health problems."

Doctors see this as an unwarranted intrusion into its duty to decide what treatment is best for a patient. During the six weeks that the Government plan is open for consultation the BMA is to encourage doctors to prescribe the pill freely on the NHS because there is no legal ban that can stop them doing so.

"No matter how much Viagra I have, I still don't find the Lib Dems sexy" — PUGH

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TIM OCKENDEN / PA



Gurkhas searching cliffs above Hastings yesterday on the third day of the hunt for the missing ten-year-olds, Lisa Hoodless and Charlene Lunnon

Gurkhas join hunt for lost girls

By Michael Horsnell

FIFTY Gurkhas joined the search in Hastings for the missing ten-year-olds Lisa Hoodless and Charlene Lunnon yesterday, as police said that there had been four unconfirmed sightings of the girls in London since they disappeared on Tuesday.

The Gurkhas joined 300 police and 50 military police on the third day of the operation as the hunt spread from Hastings to open ground, woodlands and cliff tops in the surrounding Sussex countryside.

Officers from the Metropolitan Police were checking three unsubstantiated sightings in Plumstead, southeast London — two on trains and one on a bus — and one near the crematorium in Ruislip, northwest London, where the ashes of Charlene's mother, who died two years ago, were interred.

Parents' anger, page 5

Minister to meet IRA families

Victims of the IRA are outraged by the Northern Ireland Security Minister's plan to meet the families of eight IRA men who were killed in an SAS ambush as they were driving a mechanical digger carrying a 200lb bomb at the RUC station in Loughall in 1987 ......Page 2

Strike miners attack police

Striking coalminers hijacked lorries and tore through barricades in the central town of Costesti as police tried to block their march to the Romanian capital. At one stage they held policemen hostage. Closure of the mines is recommended by the World Bank and the IMF ...... Page 12

Friends angered by Monet queue

Tempers were frayed outside Burlington House as hundreds of Friends of the Royal Academy queued for up to two hours to see the Monet exhibition preview. When the exhibition opens to the public tomorrow tickets will be timed to avoid congestion, but no such system was in place for the preview ......Page 6

Robertson joins Laura Ashley

The Rev Pat Robertson, the religious broadcaster who was once a contender for the Republican presidential nomination, has joined the board of Laura Ashley, which reported a sharp fall in Christmas sales and has just lost another chief executive ......Page 25

Four killed in mid-air crash over school

By Peter Foster

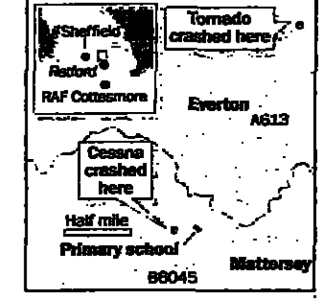
A VILLAGE primary school came within a split-second of disaster yesterday after an RAF Tornado jet collided in mid-air with a Cessna light aircraft leaving four people dead.

Children from Mattersey school, near Worksop, north Nottinghamshire, were sitting at morning lessons when they heard a loud explosion shortly before 11.30. Seconds later, according to witnesses, debris from the light aircraft rained down over nearby fields, some pieces landing 200 yards from the school.

Less than a minute later in the village of Everton, three miles away, people reported another explosion as the Tornado GR1 bomber came down half a mile from homes.

The £17 million Tornado, with two pilots on board — an RAF instructor and an Italian Air Force trainee — has manually operated ejector seats. One of the crew, the Italian, succeeded in ejecting before impact with the Cessna, but he did not survive.

Wing Commander Crispin Edmonds, acting station commander at RAF Cottesmore in Rutland, from where the Tornado had taken off, said that



the jet had been on a routine flight. RAF Cottesmore is the home of the Tri-National Tornado Establishment, formed in 1979 to train pilots and navigators from the RAF, and the German and Italian air forces.

Families of the victims were being contacted last night. No names had been released.

David Learmount, editor of *Flight International*, claimed that the system for preventing mid-air crashes over much of Britain was primitive. Routes in and out of airports are covered by air traffic control systems but in uncontrolled air space, mainly over rural areas, light planes flying above 1,000ft can go where they like. "Around half of all UK air space is completely uncontrolled," he said.

Police were yesterday beginning an investigation as the Air Accident Investigation Branch began sifting through wreckage. They confirmed that the Cessna had taken off from a private airfield at Gamston, near Retford, with two men on board.

Yesterday parents, some in tears, collected their children from Mattersey school and told of their relief after hearing how close it had been to disaster. Teresa Mapplebeck, 27, who has a four-year-old daughter, Stephanie, there said: "I heard a crack and saw the plane falling from the sky. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I dialled 999 then rang my friend, I was in a panic."

Mrs Mapplebeck then scooped up her son Liam, two, and drove to Mattersey. "I thought it had come down on top of the school. When I got there I saw debris on the road. There was a map which I think came from the plane. People were crying."

Rob Morley, collecting his daughter, Samantha, eight, and son, Dan, six, said: "I was driving with the radio on when I heard. I did not have a number for the school but telephoned a friend who told me how close they had all come."

Samantha said: "We heard this bang, and went rushing to the windows. We saw the man parachuting down."

Douglas Scrivner, of Mattersey, said: "I saw a little plane flying around then I saw a jet which came out of nowhere. It went straight through the middle of the light aircraft. Those on board would have had no chance."

Linda Watkinson, 48, who lives 500 yards from the Everton crash, watched the RAF plane spiral to the ground.



A piece of the Cessna after RAF jet "came out of nowhere"

Total recall? Here is the talking equivalent of invisible ink



Britain's new Trade and Industry supremo has an amazing ability. Stephen Byers is the talking equivalent of invisible ink. Within seconds of his speaking you cannot recall a word he has said: he simply wipes himself from your consciousness.

I was at Westminster early yesterday for Questions to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. It was the dispatch box debut of Peter Mandelson's replacement. I needed to note Mr Byers's answers. It was spooky. I couldn't. Time and again I tried to write down what Byers was saying or had just said. Time and again, all recollection fled.

Byers rose. My mind began to wander. I pinched myself and gripped a pen, forcing myself to listen. "I would like to thank my hon friend," droned Byers to Stephen Ladyman (Lab, S Thanet) "for his warm words of welcome ..."

Attention began to slip. I wrestled with oblivion but an unseen force was loosening pen from fingers. I wrenched attention back. "... We can do more ..." — and my mind blanked. Short-term memory was wiped.

So total is Stephen Byers's self-wipe function that it may be some form of hypnosis, a horrifying new technique in mind-control now learnt by new Labour. The fellow speaks and — *ffst!* — it's gone, snatched from recollection by the some mysterious force.

And new Labour ministers can now do this. They leave no mental trace. Stephen Byers is the typewriter with no ribbon, the leadless pencil, the printer without ink. "External financing limis ... regime in place ... high quality service at affordable prices ..." Byers bleated — and I blanked. The rest escapes me.

Byers is neither big nor small. His hair was grey. His accent was neutral. His suit was grey. His *tie* was grey. He looks like the assistant accountant to a large dental practice in Northampton. He was wearing glasses — or was he? Dammit, that's gone too.

When I managed to re-engage consciousness, he was speaking again, to George Turner (Lab, NW Norfolk). "Steps have been taken ... I've no doubt at all ... steps have been taken ... no conflict ... no doubt ... no conflict ..." only fragments survive, shards of cliché.

But Byers's was not the only debut at Industry Questions. Michael Wills, the new Minister for small business, was at the dispatch box for the first time. He will go far. Mr Wills takes self-wipe to new levels. I cannot even remember seeing him in the Chamber before.

And Hansard's computer-memory is susceptible to his magnetic powers of erasure. Wills seems to have wiped most of his previous interventions from the record, which notes only eight utterances in 20 months.

On yesterday's showing these are the very models of a modern Labour minister. Replying to a question about abolishing red tape from Brian Cotter (Lib-Dem, Weston Super-Mare), Mr ... er ... crikey, something is trying to pluck the name from my memory ... replied "Madam Speaker, this Government is committed, we are committed, we are indeed committed ..." What devilish cunning. We remember that they are committed, very committed indeed — but to what? Ah, that we cannot quite recall.

Answering, minutes later, on the Millennium Experience, the Minister Janet Anderson unwittingly hinted at a chilling comparison with the New Labour Experience. In the "Mind" zone of the Dome, she said, "the public will be able to interract with advanced, intelligent robots".

To interract with Mr Byers is to do likewise.

IRA victims attack plan to meet relatives

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

VICTIMS of IRA atrocities expressed outrage last night at a minister's decision to meet relatives of an IRA unit killed by the SAS while attacking a Co Armagh police station.

Adam Ingram, the Northern Ireland Security Minister, has agreed to meet the families of eight IRA men ambushed as they were driving a mechanical digger carrying a 200lb bomb at the RUC station in Loughall in 1987.

The SAS was forewarned of the attack and 40 soldiers took part in the ambush which effectively wiped out the IRA's East Tyrone brigade. A passer-by died in the crossfire. The IRA detonated the bomb during the gunfight, and it destroyed part of the station.

"It's a despicable act," said Brian McConnell, secretary of the group Families Acting for Innocent Relatives which represents victims of IRA violence in Co Armagh. His members plan to picket the meeting at Stormont on Monday.

"By no stretch of the imagination can these people be described as victims. These people, or their relatives, took away lives and the fact the Government is now consulting with them adds insult to injury. We feel Adam Ingram is dancing on the graves of the real victims by giving credence to these killers. What's right is now wrong in this country."

Andrew Mackay, the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, called Mr Ingram's decision "disgraceful, outrageous and insulting to all those killed by the IRA" and urged him to cancel the meeting.

Mr Ingram has special responsibility for the victims of the Troubles, and for taking forward the recommendations of a report on them produced by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, former head of Northern Ireland's Civil Service.

The Northern Ireland Office said: "Mr Ingram has wanted the fullest possible consultation on Sir Kenneth's report. He has met a wide range of groups and individuals who describe themselves as victims. In the majority of cases these meetings have been entirely private. He will be in listening mode when he meets the Loughall Truth and Justice Campaign."

☐ The Tories have called a Commons debate next Wednesday on the punishment beatings by loyalist and republican paramilitary groups. They will demand that the release of terrorist prisoners be halted unless the beatings and shootings stop.

The SAS killed eight IRA men in the ambush in 1987

JUSTIN KERNOGHAN



Even the soldiers are happy to see the demise of Fort Whiterock. One who watched yesterday's demolition said troops there were on a hard routine: everything had to be bombproof to withstand the constant mortar attacks by the IRA, who saw it as a symbol of British oppression

Barracks demolished in name of peace

FORT WHITEROCK, the massive army base that has dominated the skyline of republican West Belfast for 20 years, lay in rubble last night. After resisting countless IRA attempts to destroy it, the imposing barracks, with its 50ft watchtowers and bombproof walls, is being torn down as part of government efforts to bolster the Ulster peace process.

Perched high above the city at the foot of the Black Mountain, Fort Whiterock became one of Belfast's best-known landmarks and the object of bitter republican hatred. At the height of the Troubles it was home to thousands of soldiers and the target of constant IRA attacks.

Now its barricades and firing ranges are all but gone. When the demolition work is complete in a few months' time, the only building left will be the original candle factory, which was converted into a gymnasium when the troops moved in.

Republicans who saw the base as a symbol of British oppression said its demise was long overdue. "The observation posts looked right out into the surrounding housing estates and kept people constantly under surveillance," Marie Moore, a Sinn Fein councillor, said. "We now hope the land will be given back to the people in the area to have an industrial estate and maybe even a tourist attraction which would take in the Black Mountain."

Some of the soldiers based there were no less happy to see Fort Whiterock go. "Soldiers here were on a hard routine," said one as he watched the demolition. "Everything is bombproof, even the windows in your rooms are bombproof."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prisoner can sue for damages

A convicted murderer who was slashed with a razor by two other jail inmates won the go-ahead yesterday to sue the prison for damages.

The Court of Appeal upheld a decision by a County Court judge last year that Gartree prison in Leicestershire acted negligently in not taking reasonable care to ensure the safety of Robert Hartshorn. The ruling means that Hartshorn, who was jailed in 1986, can now seek to have his claim for damages assessed over the attack in July 1995, which left him needing 88 stitches and scarred for life.

It also paves the way for other prisoners who can show that the authorities had been negligent to bring similar claims. At present, only prisoners who are widely accepted to be likely targets of attack, such as child abusers, can seek to pursue such claims.

Bottom of class

A Leeds family action group lost a plea for a judicial review of the city council's decision to close Middle Park High School, which was bottom of the national GCSE league table. The school, which serves a council estate, has a falling register and a deficit of £346,000.

Wife speaks out

The wife of one of the policemen facing criticism over the Stephen Lawrence case defended him yesterday. Rosemary Ilsley said that her husband, former Detective Chief Superintendent William Ilsley, was not a racist, and that Sir William Macpherson's inquiry had been "unfair and unjust".

Stress claim

A detective who retired early because of ill health is suing Merseyside Police for damages, claiming he was negligently overworked. Detective Constable Paul Hatton, 45, who left in 1993, claims in his action that he suffers stress so badly that he will never be able to work again.

£100 levy to fund new food agency

By Michael Hornsby, Agriculture Correspondent

THE Government is to publish a Bill for the establishment of a Food Standards Agency next Wednesday, along with proposals for funding the new body.

This means that the legislation could be introduced in the current parliamentary session, even though it was missing from the Queen's Speech last November.

How quickly the new agency becomes reality is likely to depend mainly on whether reform of the House of Lords proceeds smoothly, freeing parliamentary time for consideration of the Bill.

The Government is expected to propose that the £100 million-a-year cost of running the agency should be met largely from an annual levy of £100 on each of the 600,000 shops, hotels, restaurants and other food premises in Britain.

First proposed in a White Paper a year ago, the agency is intended to act as an independent watchdog on food safety, and will take over many of the functions now exercised by the Ministry of Agriculture.

A series of alarms over food safety, from salmonella to "mad cow" disease, have undermined the credibility of the ministry, which has had the role of promoting the food industry as well as policing it.

Much of this latter function would pass to the new agency, which would be chiefly accountable to the Secretary of State for Health.

Davies returns to limelight

By Valerie Elliott

RON DAVIES, who resigned as Welsh Secretary last autumn, is today to return to the limelight for the launch of an RSPB pamphlet on how people will be able to use the Welsh assembly to advance "green" concerns.

The event, in Cardiff, is the start of an effort by Mr Davies to regain his standing as a key figure in the assembly. He plans a speech in Cardiff next month to warn the Prime Minister that more freedom should be given to Labour Party members in Wales. But Mr Davies's credibility depends on his being selected as a candidate for the assembly for Caerphilly, his Westminster constituency, tomorrow week.

Millions trace war dead on Internet

War Graves Commission site is outstanding success, reports **Michael Binyon**

MORE than four million people have sought details of their relatives and loved ones in the two months since the names of all those killed in the two world wars were posted on the Internet. The figure is higher than the number of people who have visited the Internet site of Diana, Princess of Wales, and more than twice the number of war dead whose names have been recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The commission, set up in 1917 to tend the graves of soldiers of the British Empire who fell on the Western Front and elsewhere, published all its records, computerised since 1995, on the Internet on November 9, two days before Armistice Day. Since then the site has received more than 55,000 hits a day.

In addition, after publication of the Debt of Honour Register, containing the names and details of 1.78 million casualties, some 250,000 people from around the world have written to the commission seeking further details of their relatives and war dead. The commission's headquarters in Maidenhead, Berkshire, is being rebuilt to provide a faster and more reliable service.

The commission has a staff of 1,200 around the world, the majority of them gardeners and stone masons. It has a yearly budget of £32 million, funded by the six founding countries: Britain, which pays over 75 per cent of the costs, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India. The commission's main task is tending the impressive cemeteries, war memorials and graves across the vast swath of northern Europe that saw ferocious fighting in both world wars, and in more than 100 other countries where Commonwealth soldiers have died.

The commission has offices close to the battlefields at Arras and Ypres and also in Rome. Keeping as detailed records as possible to "defeat the oblivion of time" has been a prime task. From the earliest days, next of kin and comrades in arms have located and visited the graves and memorials.

In the 1920s the records were kept in card indexes in 3,000 drawers, cross-referenced to 1,500 cemetery registers. It was impossible to find anyone without knowing the surname or details of the date of death or regiment. A search carried out after a written request costs £2.

The new database is free and makes it possible to find people with only scant information to go on. The commission says it will be particularly valuable for family historians, teachers, researchers, journalists and all those keeping alive the name and memory of those who fell.

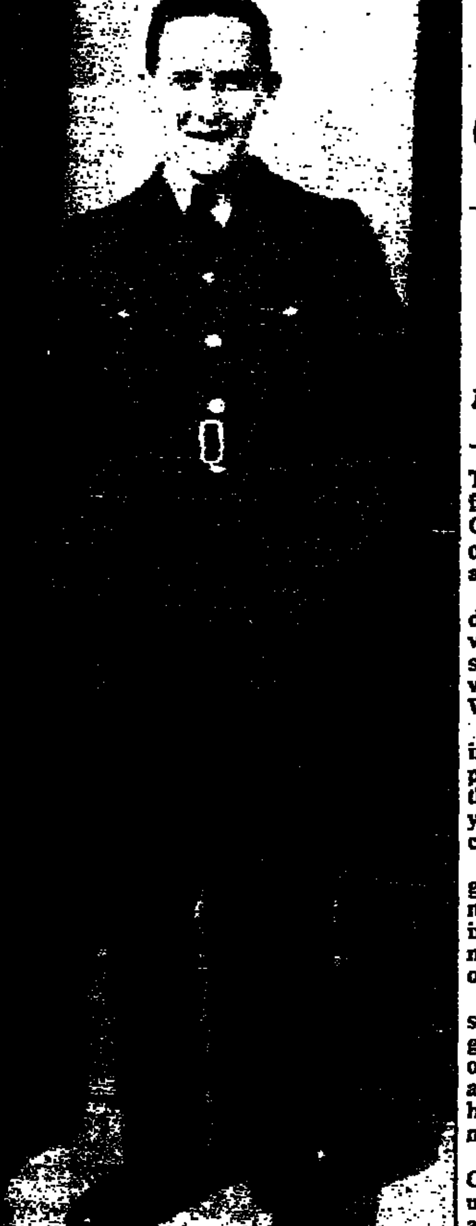
Some of the most famous British poets and architects have been associated with the design of the cemeteries and the wording on war memorials. They include Rudyard Kipling, Frederick Kenyon, Edwin Lutyens and Reginald Bloomfield. Under Fabian Ware, the first vice-chairman of the commission, the firm and, at that time controversial, principle was established that all the dead were to be uniformly commemorated, without distinction between rank, race or creed. All headstones are permanent and similar.

The Internet site reproduces these principles on screen. Each name called up has the same brief description: name, rank, company and date and place of death. On each there is a picture of two poppy wreaths at the foot of the Cenotaph and the celebrated Kipling epitaph: "Their name liveth for evermore."

Further information on each name gives a description of the battle, the circumstances and whatever else is known about the soldier and his regiment.

The commission's site is: *http://www.cwgc.org*

The Website containing 1.78 million names of war dead



Flight Sgt Kenneth John Owen Hawkins

In search of our dear Uncle Owen

*Armed with only scant details, **David Charter** went in search of his grandfather's brother, which triggered a long forgotten memory*



THERE was an unwritten rule in my family that the death of Great Uncle Owen Hawkins was, two generations on, still a subject too painful to talk about.

He was the youngest of four children and, as the baby, everyone's favourite. The few pictures that survive show he was barely out of his teens when he was shot down in the Second World War.

I remember my late grandfather lifting the rice-paper veil of a treasured photograph album and pausing over the image of his brother, a dashing young flier grinning with pride and confidence. Poor Owen, he said.

I believe my grandfather visited his grave once, somewhere on the Continent, but I don't remember him talking about it. My mother advised me not to push any questions as it would only upset him.

The details of Owen's sacrifice seemed in danger of being lost altogether when my grandfather, the last of the four siblings, died seven years ago. The lack of a memorial closer to home only added to the fragility of his memory.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website is very easy to use. Starting without even the official address of the site, my request on the Internet's opening search screen for "War graves" produced 29 options, the second of which is the commission.

After clicking on "search the register" twice, a basic question form asks for details of surname, initial, war or year of death, service and nationality.

At first it seemed as if I would be disappointed. Not one O. Hawkins was among the dozens of Hawkins listed as Royal Air Force casualties.

But the first name I clicked on, the only one with an O among the initials, turned out to be Flight Sergeant Kenneth John Owen Hawkins. I knew immediately it was Great Uncle Owen because it listed his parents' address, the village where my great grandparents are buried.

My first reaction was amazement, not just at finding the records so easily but at confirmation of Owen's age. He was just 21 when he died on Wednesday July 29, 1942. He was a pilot in 23 squadron RAF volunteer reserve. He is buried in Uden war cemetery in The Netherlands, grave 4.H.1.

My mother was delighted when I told her about the website. It triggered a fantastic last memory of her uncle, who dazzled his four-year-old niece on a surprise home visit shortly before he died. He promised to fly over the house for her and returned that afternoon, rocking the wings of his aircraft as he disappeared.

My mother's one regret about the Internet memorial is that, sadly, there is nobody left in the family of her father's generation to appreciate it.

The most popular sites are often the silliest

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

NET LINKS

THE millions of websites on the Internet range from the silly and irreverent to the serious and informative.

Whether you want to biff the Prime Minister, slap a Spice Girl or indulge your passion for sports, politics or news and current affairs, someone is there to meet your demand. One of the most popular sites is BBC On-Line — www.bbc.co.uk — which has been attracting nearly 47 million visitors a month, closely followed by Yahoo's UK and Ireland pages, with 44 million.

Other chart-topping websites covered under official figures are Line One, an Internet service provider with 22.6 million visitors a month, and Soccernet, a football news service with 12.6 million a month.

There are many websites to rival those in the official charts, among them Hoddle's Helpers — www.hoddle.com — which follows the fortunes of Glenn Hoddle and his guardian angel Eileen, a cartoon cipher for the England coach's faith healer, in a whimsical soap opera called *Wembley Park*. Kevin Moss, of Incline Media, which has designed the site, says it attracts 200,000 visitors a month.

The popular irreverent sites tend to be showcases for computer designers. Many are a mix of alternative culture, including campaigns on green issues, discussions on the legalisation of drugs and comments on football mixed with silly games. www.urban75.com, which attracts about 300,000 visits a month, is the work of Mike Slocombe, and offers, among other things, the chance to punch a celebrity.

Estimating which sites are the most popular is almost impossible, but steps are being made to audit them to produce figures like those for newspaper circulations. The Audit Bureau of Circulation is covering 70 sites, mostly those of media organisations. Among them are www.uploaded.co.uk, an electronic version of *loaded* magazine (six million a month); the British Tourist Authority's www.visitbritain.com (2 million); and the pop music site www.dotmusic.com (1.4 million).

Taunted boy 'tried to scrub himself white'

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A BLACK boy tried to scrub himself white after being taunted by schoolmates who chanted the refrain from a traditional blues song often sung in assemblies.

Elaine Ramsay, 33, from Radcliffe, Manchester, has withdrawn her son, Elliott Stephens, from the school.

She said she could not understand why her son kept saying he wanted to be white until her sister told her about the song, sung at Radcliffe Junior School each week in assembly for the past three years.

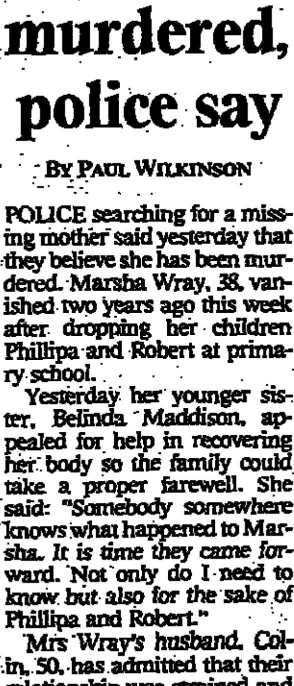
Black, Brown and White was written and sung by the American country blues artist Big Bill Broonzy in the 1930s to record how racial prejudice made it difficult for black people to get jobs in the deep south.

The opening verse runs: "This little song that I'm singin' about/ People, you all know that it's true/ If you're black and gotta work for livin'/ Now, this is what they will say to you,/ They says: "If you was white/ You's alright/ If you was brown,/ Stick around/ But if you's black, oh, brother,/ Get back, get back, get back."

Ms Ramsay said that, because the chorus is repeated five times, the children knew it off by heart and chanted it to her son in the playground. She said her son, as the only fully Afro-Caribbean child in the school, told her that everyone turned to stare at him when the song was sung.

Ms Ramsey said: "He started to say he hated being black and that he wanted to be white. He took knives from the kitchen and said he wanted to kill himself. Once I found him scratching at his skin with a nailbrush to try to make himself white."

George Purcell, the head teacher, said the song had now been withdrawn.



Elliott Stephens: tried to scrub himself white

Missing mother murdered, police say

BY PAUL WILKINSON

POLICE searching for a missing mother said yesterday that they believe she has been murdered. Marsha Wray, 38, vanished two years ago this week after dropping her children Phillipa and Robert at primary school.

Yesterday her younger sister, Belinda Maddison, appealed for help in recovering her body so the family could take a proper farewell. She said: "Somebody somewhere knows what happened to Marsha. It is time they came forward. Not only do I need to know but also for the sake of Phillipa and Robert."

Mrs Wray's husband, Colin, 50, has admitted that their relationship was strained and that he was the prime suspect but he has denied any involvement in her disappearance. He claimed she told him she needed some time to herself and suggested she had left to start a new life.

Last May police raided their home in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, and a man was detained but later released without charge. Detective Inspector Javad Ali said that if Mrs Wray had died accidentally they should have found her body by now.

Druids take spell on duty

DRUIDS are liaising with council officers in Cornwall to protect ancient religious sites from damage when an estimated 1.5 million people descend on the county for the summer's eclipse. More than 100 stone circles, standing stones and chambered tombs are expected to become a focus for new-age mystics and tourists when the sun is blacked out on August 11.

Steve Hartgroves, the county council's principal archeologist, said: "Pagans feel, as we do, a certain ownership and love for these sites." A new Cornish Sacred Sites Protection Network includes representatives from the National Trust, English Heritage, the Pagan Federation and the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. It has produced a code of conduct for visitors.

Ed Prynn, Arch Druid of the St Merryn Druids, which claims 4,000 members, said: "Anyone who has ever interfered with the stones has finished up dead in strange circumstances."

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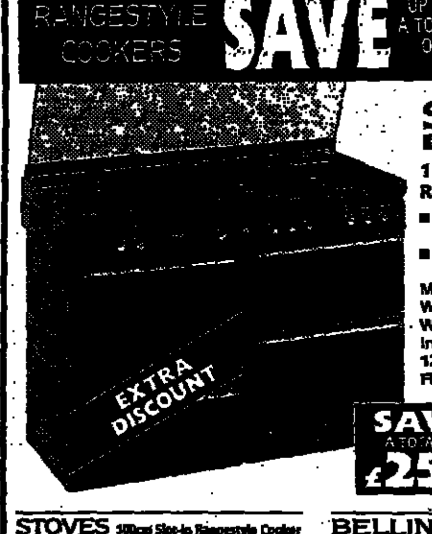
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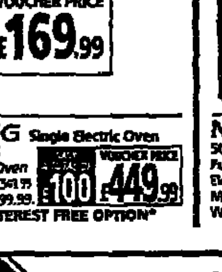


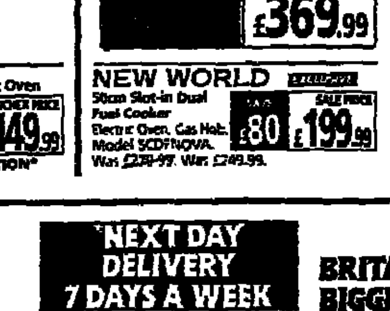
HOTPOINT Double Electric Oven. Multi Function Main Oven. Model BD31. Was £529.99. Was £529.99. SAVE £80 SALE PRICE £499.99. 6 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION*



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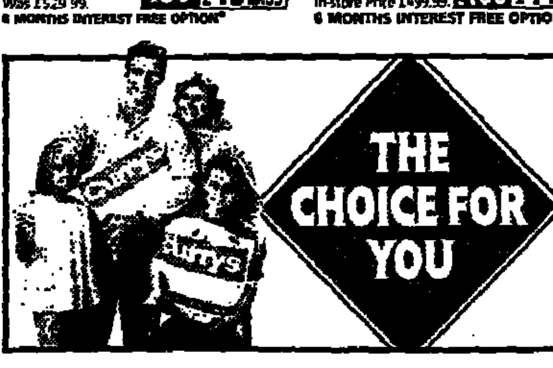


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'Why weren't we told girls were missing?'



HASTINGS
SILVER HILL
Christ Church Primary School
Upper Park Rd
School
Hospital
Amherst Rd
School
1 Tues 8.25am: Lisa leaves her home in De Cham Road to call for Charlene
3 Normal route to School
BOHEMIA
Bohemia Rd
Courts
Police Station
2 8.30am: Both girls leave Charlene's home in Cherry Tree Close
Train Station
ST LEONARDS
London Rd
College
Marina A259
1 mile
Pier
The Channel
Maidstone
Canterbury
KENT
Dover
New Romney
HASTINGS
Eastbourne



The girls should have walked just 500 yards down Woodland Vale Road to Christ Church Primary School in St Leonards. The 450 pupils said prayers for their safety yesterday as more police and soldiers were drafted in to the search

Parents say they should have been alerted at once when girls failed to arrive at school, reports John O'Leary

THE parents of two ten-year-old girls missing from home demanded to know yesterday why they had not been told immediately by the school that they had not arrived for lessons.

Charlene Lunnon's father, Keith, and stepmother, Philomena, and Lisa Hoodless's parents, Andy and Julie, said the school in East Sussex should have contacted them, especially after it issued a warning over the Christmas holidays about a man seen loitering near the buildings.

But Christ Church Primary School in St Leonards was backed by the local education authority over its decision not to alert them on the ground that the two pupils have good attendance records. Their absence was put down to "normal illness".

As the parents prepared to spend a third night without news, Mrs Hoodless said of her daughter: "She is a very emotional child and she would be scared and very frightened, cold and hungry. If anybody has any information could they please come forward."

Mr Lunnon said of Charlene: "It is totally out of character. They have never not come home before 3.45pm. I cannot understand how this has happened."

The two girls had been walking to school on their own for a month after Lisa told her parents she wanted to be "responsible". Lisa left home first to call for Charlene. The route passes no major roads or wooded areas. Residents have been asked to search sheds and garages.

State schools will be given new government advice today which could have saved crucial hours in the search for the girls. Estelle Morris, the School Standards Minister, is expected to tell head teachers that they should contact parents on the first day that a child is absent. At present the usual practice is to wait until the second day.

Christ Church School followed the current guidelines, issued five years ago, which put the onus on parents to inform schools of the reasons for a child's absence. A council spokeswoman said the school contacted parents immediately only if the absentees were regular truants.

Most state schools adopt the same practice, assuming that a child is ill unless there is reason to suspect truancy. Parents are contacted if there is no explanation for a prolonged absence.

The new guidelines are part of the Government's drive to cut truancy. They are expected to say: "On the first day of absence, if a pupil is absent without explanation when the school register is called, school staff should — wherever possible — contact the parents that same day."

At the school yesterday the 450 pupils said prayers for Charlene and Lisa. Parents have tied a yellow ribbon to the main gate to express their sympathy with the girls' families.

In the staffroom and head teacher's study at the Church of England school there is growing anxiety and resentment at any suggestion that the school has been remiss. Anne Hanney, the head, and Father Richard Harper, chairman of governors, said the school, which was founded in the late Victorian era, had followed the guidance of local education authority in dealing with the absences. Since alerting parents of a possible snooper — a man seen in a white van near the school — the school has continued to operate a policy in which it takes no immediate action over absence unless the pupil has a poor attendance record. The school, which has a good local reputation, is supported by the local education authority. A spokeswoman for the county council said: "There was nothing to suggest the girls' absence was due to anything but normal illness.

"While individual policies vary, our guidance suggests schools encourage parents to contact schools on the first day their child is absent. If parents don't do that, schools are advised to contact parents that first day only where it is appropriate. These two girls certainly did not have a poor record of attendance. The school followed normal procedures."

David Hart, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said the link with the search for the two girls should not silence debate on the merits of the Government's revised guidelines. "Having to follow up all absences on the first day is going to impose a severe burden on many schools."

Mr Hart said: "Parents often do not notify schools as soon as children are ill, so there is no reason to think that anything is amiss."

Police fear for frightened pair

By Michael Horsnell

THE 200 police drafted into Hastings from all over Sussex in the search for the two girls are led by the officer who headed the inquiry into the murder of [illegible] teenager Billie-Jo Jenkins in [illegible] in 1997.

Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine has a team seasoned in policing the decaying Cinque Port, where there are many down-and-outs and people on benefits living in bedsits. A specialist team of officers who have studied the behaviour of runaway children is also on hand. Mr Paine said it was rare for two children to disappear on their own.

"If you have a single child disappearing, it gets more and more likely there has been a tragedy — but two we don't have a precedent for. They must be very frightened."

Police have made house-to-house inquiries, notably along the girls' route to school. Helped by the Princess of Wales Regiment, they spread the search to rural areas yesterday, backed by helicopters and dog teams. Haunts suggested by schoolfriends have been searched, as have derelict buildings, sheds, garages, factories and hedges and ditches, more than once. The town is full of posters appealing for information. People have been asked to check cars, garages and outbuildings.

But Mr Paine says his "gut feeling" is that the pair have left the area, possibly for an adventure to London.

Police have checked the movements of registered paedophiles and accept that the longer the girls are missing the more likely it is that an adult may be involved.

Lisa had 'a minor problem at home'



DETECTIVES said that Lisa Hoodless was worried about "some aspect of her home life", but they made it clear that it was a minor problem and did not explain why she should have run away (Michael Horsnell writes).

Lisa, 10, lives with her father, Andy, 37, a council gardener, and her mother, Julie, 35, together with her brother, James, 12, and sisters Christine, 7, and Georgina, 12 months, in a semi-detached home in De Cham Road, Hastings. There was no sign that she had made any preparations to run away or that she took any money with her.

She and Charlene became friends when Charlene moved into a house in the next road, only 400 yards from Christ Church school — a journey they made together each morning, but on which they were always accompanied on their return.

Lisa, who is said to be a sensible, responsible girl, is a fan of the Spice Girls. Police hope that her distinctive orange jacket bearing the words Spice Fever, and her pink Spice Girls bag, will lead to her identification.

Grieving may have prompted journey



CHARLENE LUNNON was traumatised by the death of her mother, Sandra, after an asthma attack in February 1997 and her disappearance may be connected to her grief (Michael Horsnell writes).

Charlene, who lived with her mother after her parents separated, does not like to be on her own and is afraid of the dark.

After going to live with her father, Keith, and his new wife last April, she took comfort from visits to the crematorium in Ruislip, West London, where her mother's ashes are interred. Police believe that she may have become upset because of the approaching second anniversary of her mother's death and may have decided to visit the crematorium with Lisa Hoodless.

Mr Lunnon, a drugs and alcohol counsellor, said: "Last year I took her to where the ashes are and she was upset because she loved her mother very much. Charlene knew that if she wanted to go there we could, but she didn't ask me."

The girl has three older sisters. She is devoted to her hamster, which she received for her birthday last month.

Friends fall out as they suffer for their art

Royal Academy resembles first day of sales as Monet attracts thousands, writes Dalya Alberge

TEMPERS were frayed and voices raised in the elegant surroundings of Burlington House yesterday as hundreds of Friends of the Royal Academy were forced to queue for a preview of the record-breaking Monet exhibition.

This is no way to treat your Friends, was the message from disgruntled visitors in the queue, which was four or five deep in places and snaked for hundreds of metres from the gallery off Piccadilly. Many art-lovers had travelled for hours and wearily had to endure a wait of about two hours.

"Tell the Academy that the Friends are annoyed . . . They have cocked it up," said Keith Traynar, a retired head teacher, who had set off from Northamptonshire at 5.45am.

There was even an outbreak of violence at the first private view for Friends and guests on Wednesday. The head of security had his hand trapped in a door by visitors trying to enter as he fought to close the door at the end of the busy day.

The exhibition opens to the public tomorrow and has attracted a record number of advance bookings. More than 150,000 tickets have already been sold for the 12-week run. They are timed to limit entry to 800 an hour, to prevent congestion. But no such system was in place for the preview for Friends.

They pay an annual £40 subscription for priority access to exhibitions and lectures. The Academy's problem was that it has rather a lot of Friends — more than 70,000.

"They should have timed Friends' tickets," Sally Fisher, an artist from Muswell Hill, northwest London, said. "A lot of people are older and can't stand around," said Maureen Barnes, who had travelled for five hours from Cornwall. "They should have anticipated this and thought through the system for the Friends."

After the official opening of *Monet in the 20th Century*, 1,000 tickets will be available on the door each day as well as the timed pre-booked tickets. But Friends considered yesterday's queues a bad omen.



Show stopper: Friends of the Academy waiting yesterday for a preview of the exhibition, which has sold more than 150,000 tickets for its 12-week run

"There will be tens of thousands after the thousand," Derek Waters, a retired head teacher from Woolwich, southeast London, said. "I dread to think what it will be like when they come," another said.

Lowis Bacall, from Ohio, described the wait as "tiring and confusing". A woman from Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, who wished to remain anonymous said: "It's difficult to believe how we could have run an empire when we can't get timed tickets."

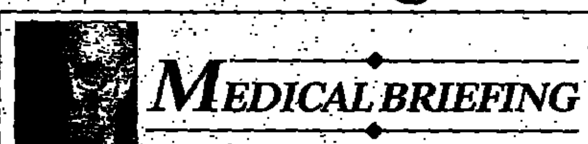
The Royal Academy of Arts, by contrast, appeared delighted by the size of the crowds. David Gordon, Secretary of the RA, said that timed tickets for the previews would not have worked because there were so many Friends and guests to cram into a few days. Mr Gordon said that Friends could book a free timed ticket after the official opening.

Some visitors yesterday were relaxed, prepared to suffer for their art, especially as the weather was clement. Georgina Hovey, from Sussex, said: "This is very British. I don't mind it. I might if it were raining." Others had arrived mentally prepared.

Ivor Barnett, from Buckinghamshire, said: "I'm not entirely surprised." Once inside, calm descended on the visitors. It was not only the relief of getting to the paintings but that the crowds around them were not thick — "just the odd congestion", one woman said.

"Well worth it," was the verdict of Pierre Richterich, a retired textile exporter who had travelled from Yorkshire.

I might just as well swallow a Smartie as take Viagra



I SHOULD be grateful. I am included in Frank Dobson's list of those eligible for Viagra on the NHS. I have had radical pelvic surgery and my prostate has been removed, but, for all the good Viagra would do me, I might just as well swallow a Smartie.

The list is not a generous one. The categories he has mentioned are the least likely to benefit from Viagra. Many, probably most, of the patients in his list will try it, find it is powerless, will not return for a repeat prescription and the NHS budget will be left without serious damage.

For Viagra to work there must, of course, be normal sexual desire, but the penis still needs the appropriate nerve supply and an adequate blood supply and, in the Dobson list of diseases, the nerve supply and/or the arterial supply is often severely compromised. The choice of diseases suggests that accountants rather than doctors selected those eligible for Viagra on the state.

After a radical prostatectomy, at least 50 per cent of patients, lacking the necessary nerves, would be left totally unassisted by Viagra. An Italian study suggests that post-prostatectomy impotence might be as high as 90 per cent. It could be that the Italians have different criteria of erectile dysfunction, but in this operation it is not always possible to preserve the nerve supply and without it Viagra will not help.

Some patients are so obsessed by the macho quality of potency and so dread the possibility of being deprived of penetrative sex that they would prefer to opt for an earlier death and turn down lifesaving surgery or radiotherapy rather than voluntarily sacrifice sexual prowess. This is mainly a choice which faces an older age group, but occasionally younger men are confronted by the same choice. To them the deprivation would not only limit sexual activities but make paternity fraught with difficulty, and dependent on a surgeon rather than romance.

Those who reject lifesaving surgery to preserve potency should remember that when a progressive disease reaches a certain stage, the general deterioration in condition also results in impotence. Potency is not likely to be useful on the deathbed and there is no sex in the graveyard. I am grateful I am still alive, albeit without some important nerves, but there are other pleasures that make life worth living.

The nature of spinal cord injury will determine if Viagra would be useful. The potency of multiple sclerosis patients will depend where the demyelination in the nervous system has occurred. Some diabetics will be helped, others will not. Patients should remember that other forms of treatment for impotence — intra-urethral pellets, penile injections and suction apparatus — are already on the NHS.

The term "severe stress" depends on the interpretation of the doctor. It seems likely that this will be the way in for Viagra treatment for those who really should be eligible, such as the young middle-aged man whose marriage is failing because of erectile dysfunction possibly caused by a lesser physical disability coupled with psychological tensions.

However, highly trained psychiatrists might be better employed detecting early schizophrenia than discussing erectile problems.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

NHS counts the cost of 'lifestyle'

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

VIAGRA is the best known of the so-called "lifestyle drugs" that the Treasury fears could wreck the Health Department budget if they are made widely available on the NHS.

The drugs treat conditions that are widely regarded as psychological, or as physical problems that sufferers ought to be able to control or deal with without the help of the health service.

Other such drugs might include Prozac, which has been a prescribable drug for depression for ten years; Xenical, for obesity; Seroxat, for shyness; and Propecia, which has been approved in the United States but has yet to be licensed here, for baldness.

What worried the Treasury was the estimate, at the annual meeting of the British Medical Association last year, that Viagra could cost the health service £1 billion a year. The estimate was based on the premise that all two million sufferers of erectile dysfunction would ask for a prescription of two pills a week.

Pfizer, the manufacturer, which sells the pills to the NHS for £4.84 each, believes that the cost would be no more than £50 million a year because only one impotent man in ten seeks treatment, and around 20 per cent of those who do cannot be given the drug for other medical reasons. However, even that estimate is too high for the Health Department, which wants to limit the cost to the NHS of treating erectile dysfunction to the present level of between £10 million to £12 million.

Security trick leads to airport inquiry

By Mark Inglefield, Political Reporter

THE Government is to hold an investigation into airport security after a serious breach allegedly took place at Heathrow.

The inquiry, which was announced yesterday by John Reid, the Transport Minister, came after an undercover reporter gained a security pass to work for Skyliner Services, one of the main cleaning firms at Heathrow.

The reporter, who was working for *The Sun*, claimed that he had secured a pass despite supplying the company with a string of bogus references. Skyliner employed him three weeks later and he was given unsupervised access to the kitchen and bar areas of six aircraft. The company declined to comment yesterday.

As result of this alleged security breach, Dr Reid has ordered BAA, the airports authority, to withdraw security passes from all Skyliner Services' temporary staff.

Dr Reid said that no new temporary passes would be issued "until such time as we are satisfied necessary and appropriate checks have been carried out to ensure that each individual is a suitable person to be employed at the airport".

Dr Reid also asked his officials to carry out "an urgent reappraisal of the regulations governing the issue of all employee passes at UK airports".

Although the minister stopped short of revoking Skyliner's contract, he made it clear that this was one of the "range of punitive measures" that might be taken if the company were found to be negligent in its security procedures.

The Sun had claimed that its reporter was left alone on six aircraft and was able to take a photograph of himself yards from the cockpit.

Dr Reid said yesterday that, so far, all he had were allegations, but "the prima facie report is sufficiently serious for all of us, public and ministers, to be concerned". He said he thought that between ten and 20 temporary staff were employed by the firm.

The Sun carried the report on Wednesday, ten years after the paper exposed security failures at the airport in the wake of the Lockerbie bombing.

"The fact that there's ten years in between should in no way diminish the seriousness," Dr Reid said. "It only takes one breach of security to undermine all of the efforts which BAA in particular, and our officials and inspectors and security specialists, have been making."


Valerie Marshall will lead a £720,000 quest for a naturally creamy yoghurt

Yoghurt scientists win pot of EU cash

By Paul Wilkinson

A RESEARCH team has won a £720,000 grant from Brussels for a three-year project on making yoghurt creamy.

The European Commission is helping scientists from the dairy industry to develop a natural thickening process, avoiding the need for artificial additives and gelatine.

The team, drawn from across Europe, is led by Valerie Marshall, a microbial biochemist at Huddersfield University. She said that improving yoghurt consistency had long been a challenge for manufacturers. "We want to develop a yoghurt to get that creamy feel naturally by harnessing its natural organisms. This way is cheaper, because you're using a process that is already there."

The team was one of only 50 to win grants out of 500 applicants working on food or agriculture projects. Professor Marshall said: "I don't think it's an awful lot of money because it's shared between seven partners. That works out at about £30,000 a year to each."

Stone inquiry to look at health law

By Alexandra Frean, Social Affairs Correspondent

THE independent inquiry into the care of Michael Stone, convicted last October of the murders of Lin and Megan Russell, is also to report on the adequacy of current mental health law, it emerged yesterday.

West Kent Health Authority, which was responsible for Stone's care at the time of the killings in July 1996, said that it was keen to establish whether the case should prompt the Government to consider changing the law governing the compulsory detention of people with mental health problems.

Although he was known to have a criminal record and to be prone to violent outbursts, Stone could not be detained under the Mental Health Act against his will because he had been found to be suffering from a personality disorder deemed to be untreatable.

The case raised intense debate about what should be done to protect the public from people with personality disorders who may be a threat to others, but who have not committed a crime and cannot therefore be detained.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, attracted criticism from psychiatrists after he accused them of using out-of-date working practices. He said it was "extraordinary" that they would take on only those patients they regarded as treatable.

The panel, chaired by Robert Francis, QC, is expected to report by the end of the year.

Blair says we need more do-gooders

By Mark Henderson and Alexandra Frean

A DIRECTORY providing details of voluntary organisations is to be sent to every household in Britain as part of a drive to promote charity as figures disclosed that individual giving had dropped by nearly a third over five years.

The directory, which will set out opportunities for voluntary work, is one of the initiatives announced by the Prime Minister yesterday to increase support for charities. Addressing the National Council of Voluntary Organisations conference, Tony Blair urged Britons to mark the millennium with an "explosion in giving" and for the term "do-gooder" no longer to carry a sneering tone.

Mr Blair said: "Let those of us who believe in the power of community reclaim the idea of doing good and wear it as a badge of pride. It is good to do good — good for those charities and organisations and neighbourhoods in which the good is being done, but good for the do-gooder as well." His comments build on his call at the 1997 Labour Party conference for a "giving age".

Yesterday he also announced plans for a Whitehall task force, the Active Community Unit, to co-ordinate and promote voluntary work across the country, and two new schemes that will encourage people to give time to charity.

The measures coincided with the publication by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations of figures showing that donations to charity have fallen by 31 per cent in the past five years. Separate research from the National Centre for Volunteers showed a decline in the number of people giving their time. The biggest drop was among young people. Seven years ago 55 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds said they had volunteered in the past year. The figure is now 43 per cent.

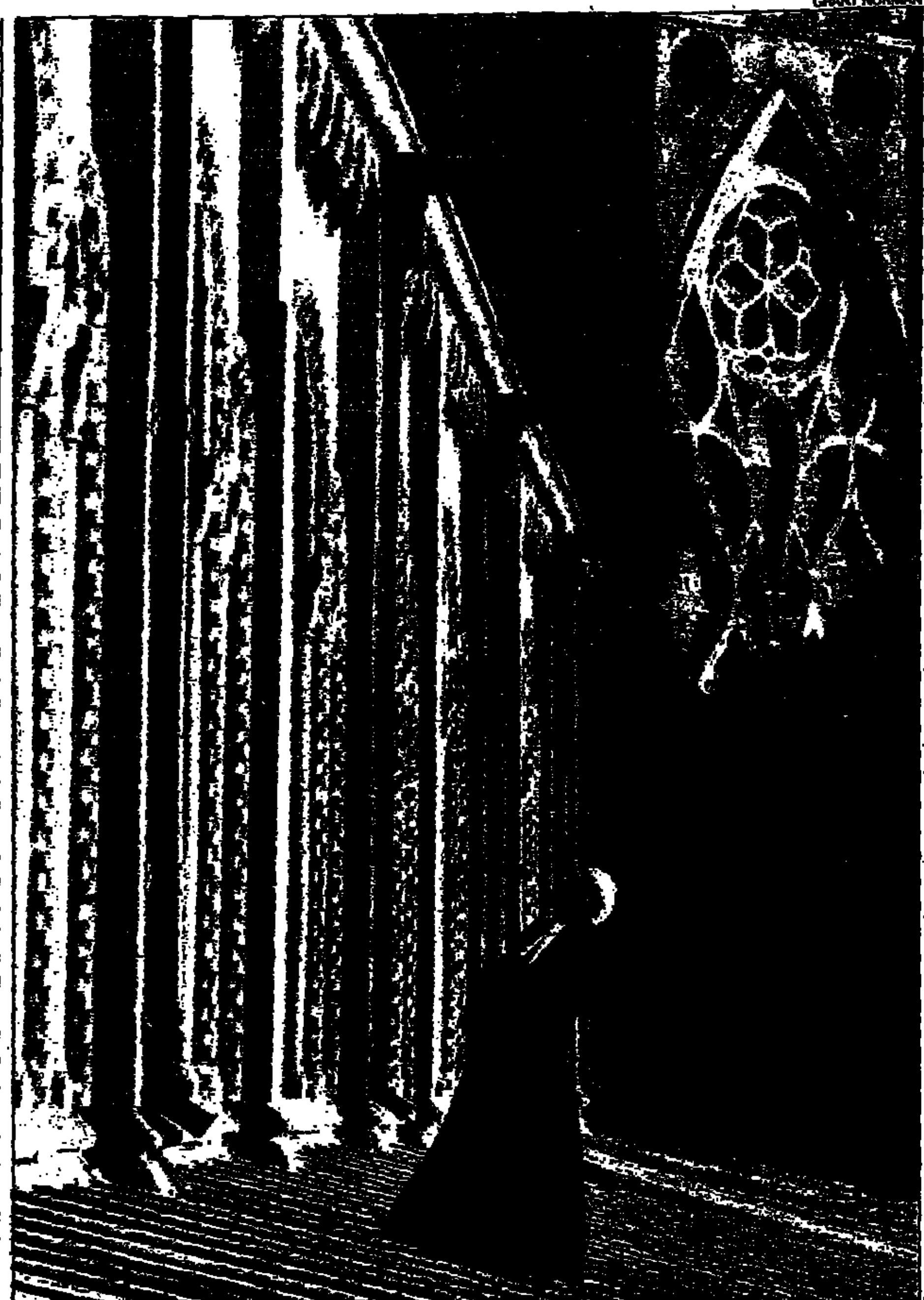
Stuart Etherington, chief executive of the NCVO, welcomed the initiatives, but called for tax breaks to encourage the rich to donate, and for charities to be exempt from VAT. "If it is a priority for government to give support to the sector, we need to see mechanisms that will help generate income and individual giving."

Mr Blair also launched the Millennium Awards Fellowship programme yesterday: 40,000 Britons will receive grants of an average of £2,000 by the end of next year to undertake community and charity projects. The £200 million programme is funded by the Millennium Commission, and an endowment fund will make the scheme permanent.

Millennium Fellows will receive a certificate of achievement, the first of which were presented by Mr Blair yesterday. These are intended to increase the esteem in which volunteers are held by society. The idea has been copied from America, where a period of voluntary service is virtually obligatory on the strongest CVs.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, announced details yesterday of the Millennium Volunteers programme, which will use £48 million of public money to provide thousands of 16 to 24-year with opportunities for voluntary work. The scheme had been intended as a kind of civil "national service" taking in hundreds of thousands of people, but has been scaled back because of problems with long-term funding. Participants will receive certificates of achievement.

GRANT NORMAN



The Very Rev Michael Higgins, Dean of Ely, on the newly repaired cathedral roof

Cathedrals face funding cut for repair delays

By John Shaw

CATHEDRALS that fail to carry out grant-aided repairs promptly are putting future funding at risk, Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, said yesterday.

His warning was directed at the authorities of about a dozen cathedrals that have failed to complete work on time and to budget.

The organisation is offering the cathedrals — which he did not name — a further £9 million for repairs over the next three years. But under the terms of the scheme the work must be carried out within the appropriate financial year. Money cannot be carried over. Sir Jocelyn said: "Those who fall behind can expect to have their level of funding reduced."

Sir Jocelyn had travelled to Ely, Cambridgeshire, to announce the funding. Just over £3 million is to be shared between 29 buildings for repairs in the next 12 months. The Cathedral Grant Scheme has paid out almost £30 million since it began in 1991.

Sir Jocelyn said Ely had set a wonderful example in its grant management. He went up on the roof to inspect nine years of repair work and admire a view stretching more than 20 miles over the flat East Anglian landscape.

Ely has already received about £3 million in funding. He said that management of the project was a tribute to the Very Rev Michael Higgins, the Dean, and his predecessor, the Very Rev Bill Patterson.

The 11th-century cathedral, known as the Ship of the Fens because of its dominance of the surrounding countryside, will get another £416,000. The money will complete repairs to the north choir aisle and fund the first part of a two-year project for work on the Galilee Porch.

Richard Halsey, head of the cathedral's restoration project and director of English Heritage in the Eastern Counties, said of the behind-schedule cathedrals: "Some have fallen behind for quite legitimate reasons, because it takes a lot to manage a project on this scale and the skills are not always available."

Salisbury Cathedral has been offered the largest grant, of £503,000, to continue work on the masonry of the west front and repairs to the medieval glazing and the southeast transept.

Other large grants have gone to Lincoln Cathedral for repairs to masonry and glazing of the Dean's Eye window, and roof and stonework in the north nave and aisle (£364,000), and Worcester Cathedral for repairs to masonry and roofs (£360,000).

City lawyers give up their time to help pupils with reading

Hannah Betts on a project that is benefiting from free books scheme

A SCHOOL named after the father of genetic engineering has come up with a cross-fertilisation strategy of its own to boost its involvement in *The Times* Free Books for Schools Scheme.

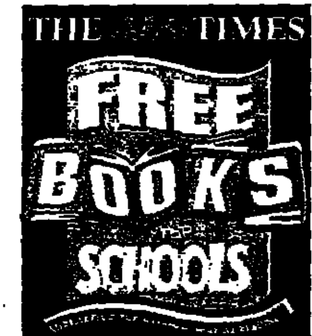
Thomas Fairchild School, in Hackney, East London, and Linklaters, a leading City law firm, joined forces in September to form an in-school reading programme and are now directing their combined energies to collecting tokens for the scheme.

Every week 40 Linklaters lawyers and support staff devote one of their lunch breaks to teaching reading at the school. The project was massively oversubscribed, with almost 200 staff applying to help. The pairings are the same each week, so that a bond is forged between two very different worlds.

The primary school is located in an economically deprived area and, for a large proportion of the children, English is their second language.

Alasdair Friend, the head teacher, said: "Literacy is one of our top priorities, but it's also been a real cultural exchange. We're less than five minutes away from the City; but some of our children have never been there. It's an introduction to another world."

The reading partners become firm friends. Gary McKinzie-Smith, a trainee solicitor, reads with eight-year-old Baboucar Jeng, known as Babs. Mr McKinzie-Smith said: "The relationship is a unique one for me: he's eight



and I'm 25. We've both enjoyed meeting someone from a different walk in life." Mr McKinzie-Smith says that Babs can be cheeky and enjoys the kudos that the scheme brings him with other children.

Since the project started, reading has become the fashionable lunchtime activity at Thomas Fairchild, with pupils lining up to meet the Linklaters' taxis. At Christmas, a celebration was held at Linklaters for lunchtime readers.

Lately, children and lawyers alike have become avid collectors of the Free Books for Schools tokens printed in *The Times* and on packets of Walkers crisps. "Our token collecting's going really well. Babs enjoys crisps and I always read *The Times*," Mr McKinzie-Smith said.

☐ *Does your school or business have a story to tell about its participation in The Times* Free Books for Schools Scheme? If so, please call on weekdays and leave details on 0171-895 9018. At the end of the scheme, *The Times* will publish a Free Books for Schools honours list in which successful schools and businesses will be commended for the number of tokens they collected and for the original ways in which they did so. Telephone your nominations now.

Token, page 24

Bible class finds room at the inn

By Sue Lappeman

A SUNDAY school class is to meet in a pub after having to leave the vicarage.

Children from St Peter and St Paul's Church in Shoreham, Kent, will have their lessons next to gaming machines and a pool table in the back room of the George Inn at Shoreham, Kent.

The class, now with 20 pupils, had been meeting in rooms at the former vicarage for the past 13 years but the family that lived there has decided to rent out the rooms.

The Rev Barry Simmons found the most convenient venue for the school at the pub across the road.

Mick Finnis, the landlord, said: "The room at the back of the pub is not connected to the main bar". Mr Simmons said: "We shall be there only from 10.30 to 11.30 on Sunday mornings so there won't be any of the public there."

Oxford college suspends its anti-fees protester

By Hannah Betts

AN OXFORD college yesterday suspended one of the five students at the centre of the tuition fees protest because it fears that she is jeopardising her education. The action follows the university's decision to ban the protesters from its premises, including the Examination Schools and all libraries.

Laura Paskell-Brown, the only protester at St Hilda's College, has not been permanently expelled and can be reinstated as soon as she pays the £1,000 fee.

Elizabeth Llewellyn-Smith, the Principal of St Hilda's, said yesterday: "We couldn't carry on with a situation in which one of our students was nominally on a degree course, but not able to carry out the job she was here to do. It was a half-baked situation. It's not a punitive action — we're not doing our duty by a student if she can't work."

Miss Llewellyn-Smith added that she and the whole of the Senior Common Room would be extremely sorry if Ms Paskell-Brown decided not to reconsider her position.

The suspension will come into force on Monday, after Ms Paskell-Brown has had an opportunity to appeal. Under the ruling, she will be banned from all college buildings.

Ms Paskell-Brown, 18, said the move would force her to submit. "The last few days have been absolutely hellish, and in many ways I'm just glad it's all over. I defend my principles into the ground, but I'm being backed into a corner now and I don't think I can go on. But the campaign against fees is by no means over — we will continue our fight indefinitely."

At Somerville, four protesters are waiting to hear their fate after a meeting of the college's governing body. Dame Fiona Caldicott, Principal of the college, said yesterday that she wanted to speak to each student before announcing the college's decision.

Yesterday the colleges issued a statement: "The university, Somerville and St Hilda's Colleges are prepared to take action in response to the non-payment of tuition fees by a small number of students.

"We regret that the protest which these students are making against the Government's changes to the funding of higher education has put them in this position. However, we must consider the consequence of their actions for their studies and the implication of their non-payment for other members of the university. We hope this matter will be resolved as soon as possible."

Today 2,000 students from around the country will take part in Oxford's biggest demonstration for nine years.

John O'Leary, page 41



Pinochet 'can only be tried in Spain'

BY JOANNA BALE

EXTRADITION to Spain is the only way to bring General Pinochet to justice because Chile is unlikely to put him on trial, Amnesty International told the law lords yesterday.

Ian Brownlie, QC, for Amnesty International, said: "It appears to be extremely unlikely that justice will be done in Chile and, given the obvious absence of any jurisdiction of an international criminal tribunal, then all that is left are extradition proceedings."

Addressing the new hearing to decide the general's fate, Professor Brownlie stated that, if extradition was denied, the former dictator "would have the benefit of a wall of impunity". He also argued that international conventions on torture and hostage-taking adopted into British law were sufficient to deny General Pinochet the immunity for a head of state that he is claiming.

Sections of the State Immunity Act 1978, which might be deemed to afford him immunity, did not do so, he said. "The State Immunity Act does not apply to criminal proceedings. In any case, you cannot have immunity from proceedings over acts which constitute crimes in international law."

Professor Brownlie made no mention of the fact that it was Lord Hoffmann's failure to disclose his close links with Amnesty International that had caused the law lords to set aside their initial decision denying immunity to General Pinochet.

Amnesty was once again granted permission to address the hearing, and the organisation's counsel is also representing two other human rights groups as well as the families of two British victims of the Pinochet regime, William Beausire and Sheila Cassidy.

Earlier the law lords were told that tortures alleged to have been carried out under the orders of the general had long been recognised as crimes under international law. Christopher Greenwood, for the Crown Prosecution Service, on behalf of Spain, argued that there was a clear international consensus about torture. He said: "We are not dealing with an area of international law on which reasonable states differ. We are dealing with conduct which for 60 years has been unequivocally deemed to be unlawful, a crime under international law."

Professor Greenwood went on to say that the allegations against General Pinochet were not purely an internal matter for Chile. "Torture falls into the category of acts which have become a matter of concern to the entire international community, wherever they take place." He argued that it was clear that individual countries had jurisdiction to try allegations of torture, pointing out that the proposed international criminal court was not yet operating, and that tribunals to try alleged crimes in troubled areas such as Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia were still rare. "There is only one way in which criminal responsibility can be brought home — that's by prosecution in a national court."

On Wednesday Professor Greenwood cited the International Convention against Torture 1984, incorporated into English law in 1988, as the basis for his argument that there is worldwide jurisdiction for prosecuting torture allegations, and that former heads of state have no immunity. He also pointed to a long history of judicial decisions which, he argued, demonstrated those principles, including the agreements that established the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, a 1954 report of the International Law Commission, and the statute of the proposed international criminal court.

More than a hundred of General Pinochet's supporters yesterday gathered near the rented home on the Wentworth estate in Surrey where he is living under the conditions of his bail and were addressed by his wife, Lucia. Through a loudspeaker she thanked them for coming all the way to Britain to "express personally your belief in the values of freedom and dignity that inspire Chileans".

The lords' hearing continues on Monday.


MATTHEW FEARN

Lucia Pinochet, wife of the former dictator, greeting supporters outside his home in Surrey. She thanked them for their efforts on his behalf

NEWS IN BRIEF

Thief seen on TV is jailed

A thief who was spotted by his victim six years later on a television show was jailed for two years yesterday.

John Parsons had stolen jewellery and antiques worth £60,000 after offering to help Pamela McMahon, an American businesswoman, to move house in London. She spotted him when he appeared on *This Morning* as a gay rights campaigner and rang the police. Parsons, 44, of Manchester, was found guilty of theft at Southwark Crown Court.

PC found guilty

A police officer was found guilty of indecently assaulting two women. Barry Richardson, 39, of King's Lynn, was given conditional bail by Norwich Crown Court. Sentence was adjourned until February 12.

Retrial ordered

A police photographer was cleared at Preston Crown Court of indecently assaulting two women. Peter Sayward, 43, of Lytham, Lancashire, faces a retrial on a similar charge of taking a full-frontal picture of a female assault victim.

Royal eviction

The Prince of Wales has joined West Country landowners in legal moves to evict travellers from Duchy of Cornwall property. About 20 caravans and 30 vehicles have been parked near Stoke sub Hamdon, Somerset, since October.

Lights out

The beacon at Beachy Head, which has warned shipping for 171 years, has gone out after the recent cliff fall damaged the mains cable. A foghorn has also been cut off. The lighthouse is operating on an emergency lamp.

Trout break out

Trout swam through gardens and along the roads of an estate in Cwmaman, South Wales, after a trout farm flooded in heavy rain and a run-off culvert became blocked. Many of the fish were eventually washed into a river.

Judge discharges juror for using mobile phone

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A JUROR was discharged by a judge yesterday after he learnt that she had taken a mobile telephone call while deliberating on a case.

The young mother was overheard by an usher making babysitting arrangements with her mother from the retiring room, where she was trying to reach a verdict on a case involving three men and a woman accused of physical abuse of mentally handicapped adults at a home.

The jury had already been out for 3½ hours on Wednesday afternoon when the usher went into their room at Exeter Crown Court to tell them that they could be sent home for the night. By law, a jury should be isolated during their deliberations "in a private and convenient place".

Judge Graham Neville, discharging the juror, who had sat through eight days of the trial, told the remaining 11 members of the panel that mobile telephones were an increasing problem for the courts. "I have discharged the lady juror with the mobile phone," he said. "We do not know what to do about mobile phones. People are told not to use them in court, but they are everywhere now and we cannot take something away from them that is their property, just ask them not to use it.

"I am sure the juror did not do anything improper, but we have to be on the safe side."

A spokesman for the Lord Chancellor's Department said that courts routinely had signs up saying that mobile telephones should be switched off or, in some cases, handed in.

In March last year, a judge ordered a court reporter to be taken to the cells when his mobile telephone went off in the middle of a trial. In November 1997 a BBC reporter was ordered out of court in South Africa, where he was covering the Earl Spencer divorce case, after his mobile telephone rang.

In yesterday's case, the judge asked the remaining jurors to continue their consideration of the trial involving three care homes in Torrington, Devon.

Donald Lee, 48, denies seven counts of ill-treating one female and three male patients in his guardianship. Diane Baxter, 51, denies two counts of ill-treating two female patients. David Tudor-Poole, 30, denies six counts of ill-treating four female and two male patients. Ivan Rowlands, 52, denies ill-treating one female patient.

The charges followed a joint investigation by police and Devon social services after complaints by relatives.

Warning over gene weapon for ethnic cleansing

BY IAN MURRAY MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

WEAPONS capable of ethnic cleansing could become a reality within ten years, with the information needed to make them being available on the Internet, the British Medical Association said yesterday.

Current research aimed at developing drugs to cure serious diseases such as cancer would make it possible to create a "delivery system" for biological weapons able to target specific groups of people with a killer virus, said Sir William Asscher, chairman of the BMA's board of science. "Science which is being used for benign purposes can be put to malign use."

Vivienne Nathanson, head of ethics at the BMA, said that, as knowledge of human genetic make-up increased, it would be possible to target very specific groups. Height, skin and eye colour were all factors that could be identified and a biological weapon could then be created to harm only people with those genes.

Work on the Human Genome Project, which aims to identify all human genes and map them by 2005, will make it possible to be very specific about what genes make up each individual. It is also now scientifically agreed that "races" do not exist: certain groups merely have higher concentrations of some genes.

Diseases such as cancer are caused by genes that have an abnormal structure. Genetic therapies are being developed that enable drugs to be designed so that they only attack the unhealthy genes. In the treatment a gene is introduced that recognises the unhealthy cells, triggering the release of a virus or poison that destroys the cancer. Healthy cells are left untouched.

The genetic weapon would work in an identical way, recognising victims by their genetic make-up and then releasing a virus that killed them. Dr Nathanson said the information would be available on the Internet and the drugs could be made in small laboratories. Terrorists as well as states could use the technology.

☐ Biotechnology, Weapons and Humanity; BMJ Bookshop, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP; £14

CORRECTION

Jack Straw asks us to make clear that he obtained permission for his daughter Charlotte to be away from school on a family holiday (Diary, January 5). Charlotte has passed the age when she is required to attend school compulsorily.

Recycling clue to evolution

BY NICK NUTTALL

THE mystery of how the elephant developed its trunk, the deer its antlers and the giraffe its neck may have been solved by scientists.

Researchers believe that a tiny genetic trick, common to all animals, can lead to a bewildering array of shapes and forms, from extravagant furs and elaborate shells to the colours of butterflies' wings.

It was previously thought that animals would have needed to evolve new genes, but findings by a team at the University of Madison-Wisconsin indicate that nature simply reorders genetic circuits in new ways. Their conclusions, in the journal *Science*, come from a study of wing-making genes in fruit flies and two different species of butterfly from North America and East Africa.

They traced the genetic circuitry that governs wing development and colour, and found that genes had been recycled to create new pigmentation by switching on a new range of enzymes or biological catalysts.

David Keys, a member of the team, said: "Evolution is working by integrating sets of things it already has. You are using a circuit over and over again." Sean Carrol, a molecular biologist and the team's leader, said that the genes used to make spots on butterfly wings were the same as the ones used to develop limbs in animals. The difference was the way in which parts of the gene were switched on.

Harvey 'jumps gun' on Lib Dem rivals

MP accused of ignoring order not to campaign for party leadership until June, reports **Jill Sherman**

THE campaign for the leadership of the Liberal Democrats began in acrimony yesterday when Nick Harvey, one of the leading contenders, was accused of jumping the starting-gun.

All MPs were told by the Chief Whip on Wednesday, after Paddy Ashdown announced he was standing down, that they could not declare as candidates until after the European elections in early June.

But, late on Wednesday night, "friends" of Nick Harvey, the little known campaigns chief, started talking up his chances and by yesterday it was clear that an unofficial "shadow" campaign team was up and running.

Mr Harvey appeared on Radio 4's *Today* programme and his friends continued to extol his virtues, insisting that as the least known candidate he needed to raise his profile.

"There is no doubt that Nick Harvey is a serious contender," one said. "He has to make it clear that he has the credentials to be leader when he gets to the point of declaring."

Mr Harvey's friends pointed out his determination to carry on with Paddy Ashdown's policies, continue links with Labour and emphasised, in what was seen as a clear repositioning, that he would accept joining the euro if the economic circumstances were right. Mr Harvey was the only Liberal Democrat MP to vote against the Maastricht treaty.

Allies of some of the leading candidates argued that the rule against declaring should be dropped as it was almost impossible not to start campaigning. There were also some grumbles in Scotland against a protracted leadership campaign, with calls for an election before May to stop accusations of a lame-duck leader during the Scottish parliament elections.

Menzies Campbell, the party's foreign affairs spokesman, appeared to pay lip-service to the rules by appearing on television and radio yesterday. There had been reports that Mr Campbell, 57, seen as the elder statesman, might decide not to stand. But yesterday the former Olympic champion said: "I still fancy my chances over 100 yards against any of the parliamentary party."

Mr Campbell said that he



Harvey: shadow campaign team up and running

would be consulting senior colleagues and his constituency, but would abide by the request not to campaign. Some colleagues were surprised at his decision to all but declare himself, but others suggested that he might be testing the water.

They pointed out that Mr Campbell would probably only enter the race if he had a good chance of winning, unlike the other candidates who could be putting down markers for future contests.

Charles Kennedy, the frontrunner, spent the whole day trying to avoid the cameras. Colleagues pointed out that he had been preparing the ground for a leadership election for some time and had tried to widen his constituency beyond his Scottish seat, aware that the bulk of party membership is in the South East and South West.

Mr Ashdown also intervened effectively to rule out Simon Hughes, the health spokesman. Mr Hughes was one of two MPs who voted against Mr Ashdown when he announced that he intended to extend links between the Liberal Democrats and Labour.

Mr Ashdown said: "The chances of anybody standing who will succeed who goes against what has been the established democratic will of the party, I don't think is terribly good. But in the end it is for the party to decide."

Mr Hughes refused to be pinned down on whether he would stand, but indicated that he might also be interested in the job of London mayor. "Our party has to make a decision as to who its mayoral candidate is. Funnily enough, at the moment the date for that election is also the summer of this year and I guess that our party would not want the same person to be its mayoral candidate and to be its leader, so read into that what you will," he said. He declined to disclose his future position on Lib-Lab links.

Other potential candidates who refused to rule themselves out yesterday were Don Foster and Malcolm Bruce, though both are considered long shots.

DAVID MOIR / NEWSFLASH



Jim Wallace, Scottish Liberal Democrats leader, after launching their conference agenda in Edinburgh yesterday. He warned leadership contenders against hijacking the Scottish and Welsh election campaigns for their own gain

Contest risks veering off-course

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

THE contest for the leadership of the Liberal Democrats is in danger of being fought on a false basis. The media focus so far has been on the attitudes of possible candidates towards the Blair Government. But that is a secondary issue. The six-month, unofficial and official campaign is likely to tell us very little about Lib-Labbery. The candidates will all stress the importance of an independent party with its distinctive identity and policies. They will play down, to varying degrees, the advantages of co-operation and of pluralist politics. They will all be running, if not against Tony Blair, then at least to show they can stand up to him.

That is hardly surprising since leadership elections are politics at their most tribal. Moreover, for the next three to four months, local Lib Dems will be indulging in their greatest passion, campaigning for the local, Scottish, Welsh and European elections. In many big northern cities and towns, the Lib Dems are hoping for gains from Labour to offset likely losses in Tory strongholds in the South.

What the candidates say will be little guide to what they do if they become leader. Apart from Simon Hughes, the likely runners all broadly agree on "constructive opposition". They recognise the gains from the talks on constitutional reform. Several MPs, as well as local activists, were worried about muddle and fracas two months ago over the expansion of the remit of the Joint Cabinet Committee, particularly the possibility of talks about health and education. This has now been clarified and the principle of co-operation was reaffirmed a week ago with the extension of talks to include European security and defence.

However, joint consultation has probably reached its high point for the Parliament with a slim chance now of a referendum on proportional representation this side of the general election. There are powerful forces in both parties opposed to closer links and the departure of Paddy Ashdown may make Mr Blair more reluctant to take political risks over relations with the Lib Dems. The Prime Minister respects Menzies Campbell but has little time for many of the other candidates.

Co-operation is likely to continue on the same basis, but there is unlikely to be any big leap forward. The leadership election may have less impact than is commonly assumed.

What really matters is which new leader will help the Lib Dems get most MPs at the next election. How far they can hold their present 46 seats — as well as the size of any Labour majority — will largely determine whether the Lib Dems are big players after the election. Charles Kennedy has the most obvious appeal to voters as an adept and witty media performer with a shrewd political brain.

But that is a source of suspicion among some activists. Mr Kennedy also has to live down his reputation as a lightweight on policy with a patchy record at Westminster. Some may also question his background in the SDP and wonder whether, post-devolution, a national party leader can come from Scotland.

The Liberal Democrats have a choice: do they want a leader with a possible national appeal or do they want someone who will reinforce the prejudices and interests of local activists? Mr Ashdown's great contribution was to give a national focus and ambitions to a locally rooted party.

Ashdown home to a warm welcome

By Simon de Bruxelles

THE happiest person in Paddy Ashdown's Yeovil constituency yesterday could barely contain her delight at the Lib Dem leader's decision to step down.

Jane Ashdown, his wife of nearly 40 years, grinned as she came to the gate of their home in Norton sub Hamdon. Asked if she was happy, she turned and skipped, Morecambe-and-Wise style, back to her front door.

Mrs Ashdown was one of a small minority in Yeovil. Most of the Somerset town appeared to be in mourning for the man who put it on the map. Mr Ashdown's ties to his constituency were closer than many MPs', despite the extra demands on his time. He held Saturday morning surgeries and continued the doorstep campaigning which in 1983 helped him to prise the seat from the Tory incumbent.

As he made his way back to Somerset last night, Mr Ashdown said: "I just want to say thank you to my constituents: they have been astonishing.

"They have given me unfailing support all through the 15 years, especially when I was wrong. Now when I get in I will take my shoes off and have a large glass of whisky."

He did not know how much spare time he would have in future. "I don't know if I will be able to just sit around. One of Jane's girlfriends said: 'You have got to keep him away from the cookery books'."

Soundbite supremo Kennedy falls silent

By James Landale

CHARLES KENNEDY might be the best known Liberal Democrat after Paddy Ashdown but yesterday he broke the habit of a lifetime and spent the day avoiding the media.

The doyen of the broadcasting studios was struck by unusual bashfulness. As his leadership rivals made their presence felt, the frontrunner was noted by his absence.

Journalists stalked the corridors of Westminster. The broadcasters hung their heads in frustration, deprived of that staple of television news: the Kennedy soundbite.

In fact, the MP for Ross, Skye and Inverness West was dealing with constituency work in his Victoria flat. His office insisted that he was not organising a leadership campaign.

At lunchtime, he slipped quietly into the Commons to discuss constituency engagements. Then, a breakthrough. He was forced to vote in the Commons at 3.30pm. He sidled into the lobbies, was spotted by journalists and fled down a corridor.

Tracked down, he said he was not busy campaigning, he was busy voting, taking telephone calls and preparing speeches. All he would say was: "The Liberal Democrats should focus on one thing and one thing alone for the forseeable future and that's all the local, Scottish, Welsh and European elections."

Dobson accused of seeking scapegoats

By Helen Rumbelow

THE Government's criticism of nurse training was an attempt to make ward staff the scapegoats for the troubles of the NHS, a nursing leader said yesterday.

Christine Hancock, head of the Royal College of Nursing, said that nurses had suffered a "night of the long knives". She was responding to comments from Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, who said last week that some young people were deterred from a nursing career by the emphasis on academic training rather than basic caring skills.

Ms Hancock said that the the NHS needed staff with the most up-to-date medical knowledge, as well as decent salaries. The chronic shortage of nurses could not be blamed on the trend towards college courses rather than hospital training. "Some assume that you can't be well educated and a caring person with practical skills. Clearly that's rubbish," she told a conference in London.

"The issue of less education for nurses is a nonsense: nurses are hungry for more education. In fact, it is more education that helps us to recruit more nurses."

There are 12,000 nursing vacancies. "The world needs someone to blame. In something akin to the 'night of the long knives', it seems that nurse education is now the scapegoat for a wounded NHS," Ms Hancock said.

She rejected the idea of increasing the number of less-qualified carers in hospitals. The shortfall in staff to perform basic tasks such as bathing and feeding was best covered by employing more highly qualified nurses rather than "hospital care assistants who perform routine tasks", she said. This was more cost-effective in the long run as it had been proved that skilled nurses got patients better quicker.

"High levels of skill are not cheap on the pay bill, but it makes a real difference. Studies have proved that with a low ratio of qualified to unqualified staff, patients run a higher risk of developing avoidable complications."

Ms Hancock did, however, admit that there were difficulties with Project 2000, the training system introduced in the 1980s which involves a three-year diploma course rather than the previous system of more practical training in hospital nursing schools.

Last week Mr Dobson suggested increasing the numbers of student nurses on wards. But he was urged to be cautious by Sue Norman, head of the UK Central Council, the nurses' regulatory body.

"We are very concerned about whether nurse education is appropriate," said Ms Norman, "which is why we set up a commission to give us recommendations on change in June. Project 2000 is up to 15 years old and we need to rethink it, but we want to be very careful that we don't give a knee-jerk reaction."

She believed that there was too strong a divide between registered general nurses and healthcare assistants.

NHS STAFF COMPLAIN OF BULLYING

[illegible]



CHRIS HARRIS

Gary Glitter yesterday. He wore his sunglasses throughout the four-minute hearing

Glitter in court on child sex charges

GARY GLITTER made his first appearance in a Crown Court yesterday to face a series of sex and child pornography allegations.

The 54-year-old pop star, who has a home in Wedmore, Somerset, was driven to the court in Bristol in his Mercedes coupé, which has blacked-out windows. He wore a black suit and leather coat and a black wig.

He kept his sunglasses on throughout the four-minute hearing, during which he spoke only to confirm his real name as Paul Francis Gadd. He cupped his ear to help him to hear the submissions made by his lawyer.

Glitter, a father of two, faces eight charges of sexual offences involving a girl and 50 charges relating to indecent photographs of children. He was arrested in 1997 after police examined a computer he had taken to a shop for repairs. The allegations date back as far as 1980.

Yesterday the case was adjourned for two months and he was remanded on conditional bail.

Men suffer equally on violence in the home

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

MEN are just as likely to be victims of domestic violence as women, according to the results of a Home Office survey issued yesterday. The research showed that 4.2 per cent of men and the same percentage of women said they were assaulted last year.

Male victims were likely to be under 25, working part-time and in households where there were financial difficulties. They may have had a long-term illness or disability. The women victims were also young and more at risk if they were at home with children or separated from their partners.

The research also said, however, that women were twice as likely to have been injured, three times more likely to have faced serious threats and were more likely to have been assaulted at least three times.

The study suggested that the risk of domestic violence was increasing and one reason might be that young people had more relationships, living with different partners.

The survey, based on the British Crime Survey for 1996, concluded there were 6.6 million incidents of domestic violence in 1995.

Accurate radiation aids cancer sufferers

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

A NEW radiotherapy for prostate cancer which significantly reduces the risk of side-effects has successfully completed its trials and could be used to improve treatment for many other cancers.

The treatment, which is known as conformal radiotherapy, shapes the radiation beams to the irregular outlines of a tumour, confining its effect almost entirely to the diseased tissue.

Prostate patients given conventional radiotherapy are at high risk of developing rectal inflammation and bleeding. This can be so severe that it is necessary to limit the radiation, which means the cancer is not properly destroyed.

The new technique is being developed by Institute of Cancer Research scientists, who have conducted trials on 225 patients at the Royal Marsden Hospital in Sutton, Surrey, and Fulham, London, *The Lancet* reports. The project was partly supported by funding raised for the institute by *The Times* Christmas appeal in 1997, which was so successful that additional funds were able to be directed into research such as this.

Miners attack police in march on Bucharest

BY SEAN HILLEN IN BUCHAREST AND ROGER BOYES

STRIKING coalminers, wielding iron bars and wooden truncheons, hijacked lorries and tore through barricades in the central town of Costesti as police tried to block their march to the Romanian capital yesterday.

Shouting "We fight for jobs and our lives," the miners briefly held policemen hostage. Some were admitted to hospital with head injuries. One report said several protesters were armed with guns.

As the miners tried to break through the main doors of the council offices in Costesti, 120 miles from Bucharest, terrified staff rushed out of the back doors and the violent showdown continued into the evening.

Residents supplied the miners with bricks and broken pavements as missiles against police batons and volleys of teargas, while shopowners lowered their shutters.

An estimated 20,000 miners from the Jiu Valley are marching to Bucharest in an effort to prevent the closure of mines, an action recommended by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The closures are part of the restructuring of Romania's economy. Last night the angry miners edged closer towards an open confrontation with the increasingly nervous Government. The marchers, led by Miron Kozma, a militant, refused to hold talks with ministers.

The pit workers of the Jiu Valley have traditionally made or broken Romanian leaders and this demonstration, which is also for a radical pay increase, is snowballing rapidly into a popular rebellion. As they push their way eastwards towards Bucharest, the miners have been joined by factory workers. Next week teachers will strike in sympathy, schools will close and young people will start to join the protest.


A policeman confronts marchers in Costesti

The Romanian press describes the march as an attempted coup and is warning of a return to dictatorship if the miners should reach Bucharest and make a physical assault on government buildings. The security forces are doing their utmost to hold up the procession of honking buses and cars.

In Bucharest, President Constantinescu issued a warning last night that giving in to force used by miners would compromise Romania's post-communist democracy. "We no longer face a protest but rather a brutal attack on security forces and on state authority," the President said. "The Government must negotiate, but reforms cannot be negotiated."

Gavril Dejeu, the Interior Minister, has ordered barricades to be put up along the protest route. He has publicly promised that the police will open fire on the demonstrators, but the denial itself has raised suspicion that something of the sort may have been planned. So far the police in full riot gear have confined themselves to banging their shields with truncheons and chanting "They will not pass." The miners have successfully avoided several cordons.

The situation is explosive. The miners from the Jiu Valley were the most privileged section of the working class under the communist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu. They enjoyed a measure of political protection and were among the few Romanians who were able to voice their discontent in a state tightly run by the Securitate secret police. But they could also be manipulated. When miners started to whistle and boo Ceausescu in Bucharest before Christmas 1989, it was immediately clear that his personal power had evaporated.

The miners have gathered en masse in Bucharest twice since then. In 1990 they attacked protesting students in University Square. On the second occasion they forced the resignation of the then Prime Minister, Petre Roman. The latter, the leader of the Social Democrats, a government coalition partner, yesterday appealed to the marching miners to disperse and go back home.


RADU SIGHETI / REUTERS

A coalminer runs towards security forces with a teargas grenade launcher seized from riot police at the height of clashes in Costesti yesterday

Novel twist as life imitates art theft

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

IN A case of life imitating — or, rather, pilfering — art, a valuable painting has been stolen from a museum in Chambéry, echoing the plot of a novel written by the mayor of the eastern French town.

In his 1993 book *The Unknown Uccello*, André Gilbertas imagined a scenario in which an artist spotted a painting by the 15th-century Florentine artist Paolo Uccello on the walls of the town's Musée des Beaux-Arts, and stole it.

Sure enough, the Uccello painting of an unidentified man was duly filched last Friday or Saturday, causing considerable embarrassment to the museum authorities, who had made no special security arrangements to protect the work despite the implied fictional warning from M Gilbertas.

"The painting has great value in the art market, but it is unlikely to be sold on by a dealer because it is just too well known," said Chantal Fernex de Mongex, the curator of the Musée des Beaux-Arts.

As in the best whodunnits, the list of possible suspects is narrowing. There were only six visitors to the museum on Friday afternoon, and although the theft was not captured on security cameras, all six were filmed entering and leaving the building.

"Only two of the six were wearing big overcoats and none was carrying a large bag," Mme Fernex de Mongex said.

'Gun that killed Mussolini' found in village graveyard

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

POLICE in northern Italy said yesterday they had found the automatic pistol believed to have been used to kill Benito Mussolini, the Fascist dictator, and his mistress, Clara Petacci, at the end of the Second World War.

They said the weapon, sought for more than 50 years by pro- and anti-Fascists and by historians, was found buried in a small church cemetery in the village of Montefiorino, near Modena.

Officials said they had received an anonymous tip-off telling them where to find it. "The voice said, look near the church and you will find the gun which killed Mussolini," police at Modena said. Scholars said it appeared that the Italian partisans who shot Il Duce and Petacci near Lake Como in 1945 had "wanted to get rid of the murder weapon in a safe and isolated spot".

Nicola Tranfaglia, an expert on the partisan movement, said the find was "very significant". Professor Tranfaglia said the killing continued to exert a fascination because it marked "the founding moment of the new order, an event which helped to enable Italians to move out of the shadow of fascism — in which many of them had assented — to postwar democracy."

Giuseppe Tibis, the deputy prosecutor at Modena, said he had ordered a ballistic report. "To me it is just another firearm whose owner we have to trace," he said. "The rest is up to the historians."

La Repubblica said it was understood locally that a partisan fighter from the Modena region had taken the gun back to his hometown after the shooting.

Mussolini: fatal weapon was sought for years

Kosovo peace monitor defies Serb ban

Istead of leaving the country as ordered, William Wlker is fighting back, writes Tom Walker in Sipolje

THEead of the international montring mission in Kosovo defie a Serbian government ordeo leave Yugoslavia yesterd: Instead, he took journali; on a tour of army position that he said were in brea of the ceasefire.

Wiam Walker had intended fly to Belgrade to confrot his accusers but, on adve from Wesley Clark, Na's Supreme Commander, he cided it was too risky. It wod have given Yugoslav authdies the chance to deny his pla: landing permission and dirt him out of the country.

confident Mr Walker hinthat he had strong new evidce to back his assertion th Serbian security forces we responsible for the Racak massacre. There was speculat among monitors that inminating police radio messes may have been picked during observations of the ration that left 45 ethnic Albaans dead, most with bulleounds to the head.

Milosevic has pushed himselnto a corner, and he suddey realises he doesn't even ha the support of Russia," said an aide to the ambassador.

Mr Walker, with 37 years of foreign service and experience of angry Serb minorities from Croatia, must know, however, that he has embarked on a risky course. He was meant to have left Yugoslavia by 5pm, after the authorities had extended his stay by 24 hours, and his office has been inundated with threatening telephone calls from Serbs.

The previous evening, Mr Walker had entertained the international press corps in Pristina, and laughed off suggestions that the event should be called "the last supper".

He said he had the full backing of all 54 nations in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and had received many letters of support for his defiance of President Milosevic's Yugoslav regime.

"I've had a letter from Kofi Annan, and I guess that kind of represents the world," he said. Afterwards he was forced to leave the restaurant by a back exit as Serb skinheads lingered menacingly in its car park. The American has a few bodyguards from special forces, but largely relies on Albanian staff for protection. No one in the Pristina OSCE mission is armed.

Mr Walker has remained steadfastly unrepentant since he pinned responsibility for the Racak deaths on the police on Saturday. "I did not blame the Serbs, I blamed the security forces," he told journalists. Asked if the OSCE mission would have been worthwhile if it was closed down, he said: "We have shed some light on what's going on here."

Vuk Draskovic, the former opposition leader now in alliance with Mr Milosevic, was said to have been involved in talks with Russian leaders to find a face-saving deal for the Yugoslav Government that would allow Mr Walker to stay.

A Serbian deputy premier, Tomislav Nikolic, said that because of "diplomatic moves", Mr Walker's departure "will be delayed so that he could be given the chance not to be thrown out but to resign" — ostensibly for health reasons.



VIZAR KRYEZIU / AP

William Walker outside a Yugoslav barracks yesterday near the northern town of Podujevo as he took journalists on a tour of army positions

The controversy overshadowed the arrival in the Kosovo capital of Finnish forensic scientists, who began their examinations of the Albanian bodies forcibly removed by police from Racak mosque on Monday. The Finns have portable X-ray machines to study bullet wounds — equipment that had not been available locally. Helena Ranta, the team leader, said that within ten days, the Racak mystery could be cleared up.

Mr Walker's persistence was matched by that of the police, who continued another offensive in the north of Kosovo on the outskirts of the industrial town of Mitrovica. The streets of Sipolje village lay deserted as hundreds of officers in battle fatigues pushed back KLA guerrillas in neighbouring Vagacin and settlements to the southwest.

Reporters heard tank shells fired in the morning, and an army anti-aircraft gun was parked in the middle of Sipolje in the afternoon. There were no reports of casualties.

Police appear to have been flushing out a KLA cell they blame for the death of a colleague, and serious injuries to others, a week ago. A CNN camera crew recorded a round-up of male suspects, in an operation bearing troubling similarities to the start of the Racak operation. Few OSCE monitors were in evidence.

JS calls for Nato airstrike threat ;gainst Milosevic

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

TH Americans are calling for lato to issue an ultimatumo President Milosevic to fon him to comply with all thelemands over Kosovo or facairstrikes.

Ahough the ultimatum optio has not yet been approed by Nato members, a Foign Office official confimed that this was now one of tе priority topics under discuson at alliance headquartersn Brussels. Nato sources sai Washington was not the oi alliance member pushig or an ultimatum.

Britain is expected to suppt the idea, although the breign Office official said tis would not be practical unis a proper political strategy hd been agreed. The ultimatn option will be studied at tay's meeting of the six-nati Contact Group in Lond. However, with Russia opped to any military action, aitrikes will not be on the Ctact Group's agenda.

he Foreign Office official al said it would be importa to spell out Nato's demads to Belgrade. They wld have to include, the officia said, complete complian with the October peace agement reached with Richar Holbrooke, the American spal envoy, including the witrawal of most of the Se forces to their barracks, the rescinding of the expulsion order on William Walker, the American head of the verification team in Kosovo, and free access for the war crimes tribunal to investigate last Friday's massacre of 45 Albanians.

A strategy is expected to be drawn up by the end of this weekend that could lead to a formal deadline being imposed on Belgrade next week. A Nato source said: "The alliance wants this resolved peacefully. For that to happen, Mr Milosevic has got to allow an independent investigation of the alleged massacre and that means allowing Judge Louise Arbour [chief prosecutor of the war crimes tribunal in The Hague] to head the inquiry."

France yesterday announced that it was sending an aircraft carrier to the Adriatic and redeploying 18 warplanes in response to the Kosovo crisis, and Germany sent eight Tornado fighters to an airbase in Italy to cut response time in case Nato does order a military strike.

Joschka Fischer, Germany's Foreign Minister, however, questioned the wisdom of using force to end the fighting, saying the limits to such tactics had been demonstrated by last month's American offensive in Iraq. "The use of force must be the last possible option," he said.


Vultures rest near the national motto after feeding on corpses outside the State House in Freetown, where rebels continue to terrorise resident

Mr Okulate, with his wife Yegbeh, shows his passport to Sam Magai, his rescuer

Briton escapes carnage

Wife without visa is left behind among drug-crazed killers in Sierra Leone, writes **Sam Kiley** in Freetown

A BRITISH construction worker who witnessed horrifying atrocities by drug-crazed youths when he was trapped behind rebel lines in Sierra Leone was rescued by militiamen yesterday and flown to neighbouring Guinea.

His wife, Yegbeh, who endured the ordeal with him, was forced to stay in the country because she does not have a visa to travel on to Britain.

Destitute after being robbed, sweating from malarial fever and shaking in terror, Olumide Okulate, 39, from Hackney, East London, emerged waving his British passport from his hiding place among shacks where locals had protected him and his wife. Wearing a pair of shorts and a T-shirt — his only possessions — Mr Okulate beamed as he was greeted by Sam Magai, a shotgun-toting member of the Kamajor militia, the only fighting force of Sierra Leoneans loyal to the democratic Government.

"I have seen things that you wouldn't even believe in a documentary," said Mr Okulate. The son of a Sierra Leonean and Nigerian couple who emigrated to Britain before he was born, he was orphaned and grew up in care. He married Yegbeh in November last year, but was unable to leave Sierra Leone at Christmas because his bride did not have a visa. His Nigerian name and British nationality were a potential death sentence when rebels entered the city on January 1.

"It was absolutely terrifying," he said. "They came in saying that they would not hurt anybody, and then they started killing at random. They burnt children to death on the street. They set fire to their homes and then forced them back in. People were shot like chickens.

"The people around kept me from going out at all because I don't speak Creole and that would have given me away. For five days we just hid in a cellar in a neighbour's house while there was shooting and bombing going on outside."

As he spoke, his Kamajor saviours eyed groups of young men on street corners and whispered warnings that many were known rebel collaborators. Mr Okulate kissed his wife goodbye and was bundled into a jeep as the Kamajors cocked their weapons, fearful of ambush.

Passing a Kamajor c[illegible]point, Mr Magai, an agri[illegible]tural student who has [illegible]en wounded four times in ba[illegible]es with the rebels, issued new [illegible]ders: "You find a rebel — [illegible]o talking, just execute th[illegible]. Don't let them multiply."

Safely back in a hotel, [illegible] Okulate was given water [illegible]d food, his first for two day[illegible] "I am so glad to be out of the[illegible]," he said. "Many of the re[illegible]ls were out of their mind[illegible]on drugs — cocaine and her[illegible]. I don't know where they g[illegible]so much. They partied all [illegible]ht long and killed during [illegible]he day. These are the mos[illegible]vil people on earth."

Given $300 (£180) by a [illegible]ell-wisher, he then flew to [illegible]inea, where he was met by [illegible]ritish officials. His wife wi[illegible]oin him when she gets a visa.

Scores of Sierra Leo[illegible]ns were less fortunate. A [illegible]ryload of 40, all with both [illegible]nds chopped off by rebels, [illegible]ere driven into Connaught [illegible]spital. Locals said hundre[illegible] of rebels were hiding in sh[illegible]ies off the main road — reta[illegible] by Nigerian soldiers — [illegible]ere they were terrorising civi[illegible]ns.

Send mercenaries, pa[illegible] 20


Ray Choto after being released in Harare yesterday. He told of electric shocks and near-drowning

Journalists freed after torture by Mugabe police

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

A NEWSPAPER editor and reporter were released from illegal military custody in Zimbabwe yesterday, bearing signs that they had been tortured by military police trying to force them to identify their sources for a report of an alleged coup plot.

Mark Chavunduka, 34, the editor of *The Standard*, and Ray Choto, 36, had bruises on their faces and swollen hands. Mr Choto's hands were about three times their normal size and had burn marks on them. He walked with a limp. As they left Harare magistrates' court on bail of Z$10,000 (£155), they appeared to be in the final stages of exhaustion, their eyes badly bloodshot.

According to Mr Choto's brief account as he left the court, he was intensively tortured with half-drowning, electric shocks and beatings for about 21 hours over two days. He said his interrogators told him that President Mugabe had signed his death warrant and that he would be tortured until he died. The details came at the end of a ten-day legal battle against the security authorities to release first Mr Chavunduka and then Mr Choto. They were illegally detained after their report last week that 23 soldiers had been arrested in December for inciting a coup.

Their interrogation, the ease with which military authorities secured the collusion of other branches of the Government and their confident dismissal of High Court orders, establishes an alarming new direction in a country seized by economic crisis and widespread resentment over the Mugabe regime.

The violent reaction to *The Standard* report is seen as an indication that Mr Mugabe sees an attempted military coup as a real threat. Witnesses have reported hea[illegible]y-armed troops guarding [illegible]e gates of army headquar[illegible]s, and a significant increas[illegible]n the number of sentries in c[illegible]bat uniform guarding Mr [illegible]gabe's residence.


Chavunduka: in fina[illegible] stages of exhaustion

Mr Chavunduka spent [illegible]0 days in illegal military de[illegible]tion. Mr Choto had bee[illegible]n hiding from military p[illegible]ce until Tuesday, when he [illegible]ve himself up to police. [illegible]y handed the pair over to [illegible]litary police, who drove [illegible]he blindfolded journalists to what is believed to be a s[illegible]ret police interrogation cen[illegible] at Goromonzi, about 35 [illegible]les east of Harare.

Mr Choto said he ha[illegible] his head rammed into a buc[illegible] of water to the point of d[illegible]wning, and was allowed m[illegible]entarily to gasp for air, o[illegible] to be forced back into the [illegible]ater again. He was given e[illegible]tric shocks all over, includi[illegible] his genitals. Both men sai[illegible]hey had managed to prote[illegible]heir sources.

Military police re[illegible]ned them to Harare poli[illegible] on Wednesday. The pa[illegible] appeared before a ma[illegible]rate yesterday, charged with [illegible]ausing alarm, fear and de[illegible]ondency", and are due to [illegible]pear again on February 22.

Leading article, [illegible]e 21

هكذا من الإهمال

Mexico wary as Pope returns

Church under fire for political activities, writes David Adams in Miami

WHENhe Pope arrives in Mexico today ta rapturous welcome from one ofhe world's great Roman Cathol nations, the enthusiasm of his reption will *conceal* the straine and sometimes violent relationsip between the Mexican authoritis and the church.

Theging pontiff will address a countr where foreign priests have been epelled recently for alleged involvement in politics. The Catholic Churc has also been blamed for fomeing an armed revolution amor Indians in the southern state f Chiapas. And Church leaders hve spoken out against Mexico's iuman rights record, governmen corruption and the freemarkt economic policies many *blare* for worsening poverty.

Tl: Government is so anxious abot the political content of the Pops public remarks that it has sent epresentatives to the Vatican in rcent weeks in an apparent effor to soften the impact of his visit.But, much as in Cuba a year ago, durch officials say the Pope is unlikly to direct public swipes at his hets. Instead, the issue of Chiapas vll be reserved for a private meetig with President Zedillo.

"We don't expect the Pope to make any direct comments in his public appearances," said Johan Flores, a spokesman for the Mexican Church's Social Pastoral Commission. Instead, his homilies are likely to address general issues affecting the Americas, such as human rights, violence and poverty. As for Chiapas, "he will raise it, but not in an incendiary fashion", Señor Flores said.

But any mention of human *rights* has *special resonance* in Mexico. Only last week the New York-based Human Rights Watch issued the findings of a two-year investigation. This found that Mexican judges, prosecutors and law-enforcement officers collude to torture suspects, obtain evidence illegally and block investigations into human rights violations.

For generations the Catholic Church was never officially recognised by the leaders of Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and it remained silent on important political and social issues. But, after winning official recognition in 1992, it has taken on a more activist role.

In Chiapas, wealthy, pro-government landowners and armed paramilitary groups have waged a virtual war on the Church since Zapatista rebels launched an armed uprising in 1994. Priests have been attacked for defending demands by Indian rebels for social justice.

A dozen churches have been closed and in some areas priests seldom walk about after dark or travel to more remote parishes for fear of ambush. Gunmen opened fire on a pastoral convoy carrying Bishop *Samuel Ruiz of San Cristóbal de las Casas*, whom the Government views as the spiritual leader of the Chiapas rebellion.

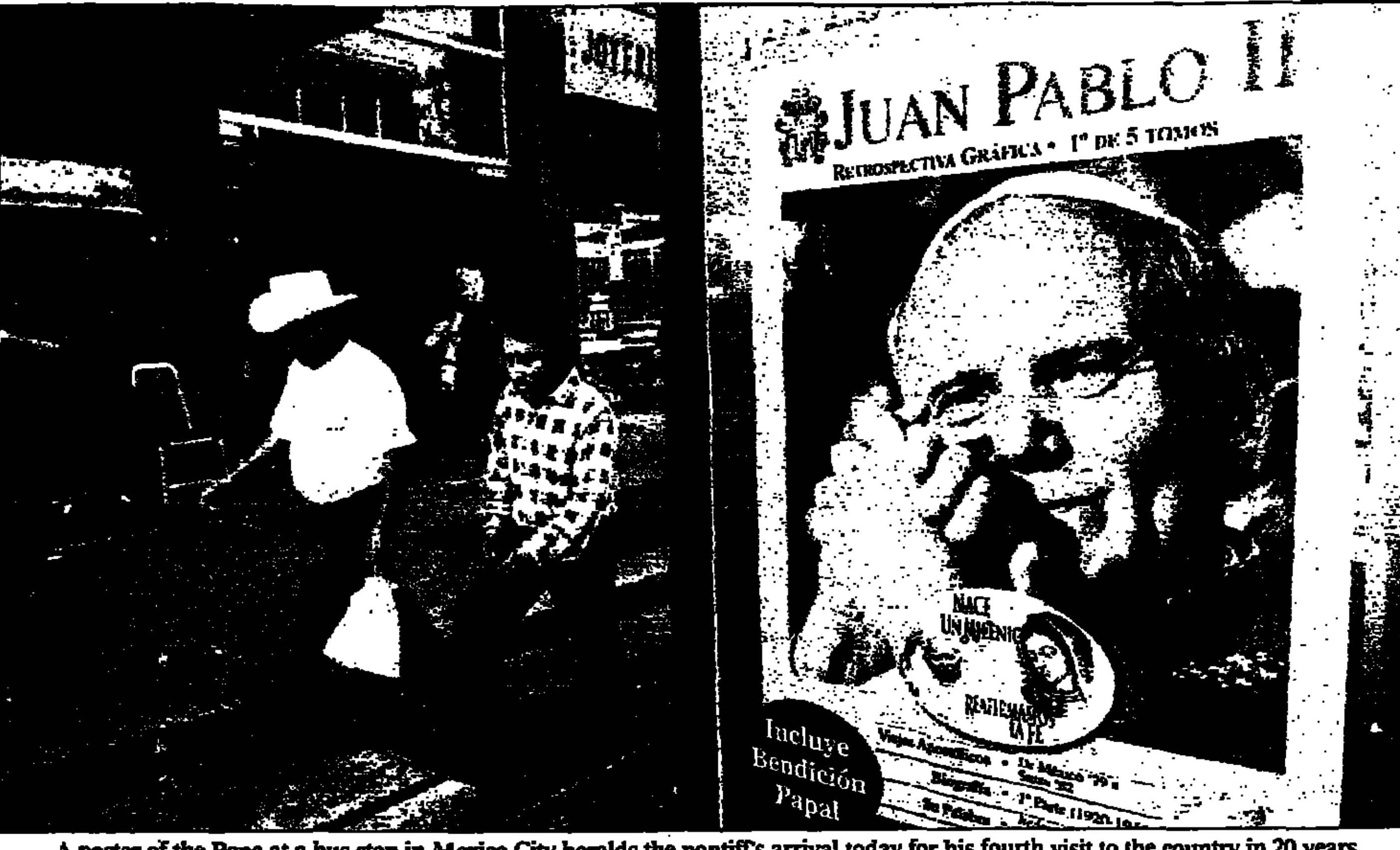
Instead of coming to the Church's rescue, the Government has sided with its critics, expelling six foreign-born priests accused of supporting the rebels. Msgr Ruiz *hit back on Christmas Eve, issuing* a scathing pastoral letter, forwarded to the Pope, that attacks "the madness of an economic model that devours a nation's wealth and concentrates it in few hands".

Mexico is where, 20 years ago, the Pope began his peripatetic pontificate. This is his 85th foreign trip, *and it may be his last to this hemisphere.* These days his speech is slurred and he is increasingly frail.

The official purpose of his visit is to attend one of a series of regional gatherings of bishops convened to set church's goals for the new millennium. Most of the talk will be either theological or on administra*tive issues, but the synod* is expected to tackle thorny political issues facing the Church in the Americas.

They include the widening gulf between the rich and poor, the effects of global capitalism, and burdensome foreign debt. In Mexico, the bishops are likely to highlight the plight of Honduras and Nicara*gua, the* two Central American countries worst hit by last year's Hurricane Mitch. Both have enormous outstanding debts.

On Tuesday he leaves Mexico for the United States where, during a two-day visit, he will hold a private meeting with President Clinton.



JORGE SILVA / AFP

A poster of the Pope at a bus stop in Mexico City heralds the pontiff's arrival today for his fourth visit to the country in 20 years

WORLD IN BRIEF

France is fined over media rights

Strasburg: The European Court of Human Rights condemned Francfor violating the free-speech rights of the satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné*. The court found French courts had violated theEuropean Human Rights Convention by fining the magazine F5,000 (£1,500) in 1993 for publishing tax forms of Jacques Calvet then head of the carmaker Peugeot. An appeals court ruled the weekly made inroads into M Calvet's privacy despite lawyes' arguments that anyone is entitled to consult public tax rolls. The magazine had printed the tax form during a strike at Peugeot over pay, and the form showed M Calvet's own salary had icreased by nearly 50 per cent in two years. The European Court sentenced the French state to pay the weekly Fr10,001 in damges and Fr60,000 in costs. *(Reuters)*

$18m raider jailed

Jacksonville: A Florida armoured car driver who stole a record $18 million (£11.5 million) was jailed for 25 years for kidnapping and money-laundering. Philip Johnson, 35, pulled a gun on co-workers and loaded a van floor-to-ceiling with cash. He said: "I don't want more than 1 or 2 million for myself." He said he planned to use 20 per cent to help poor Central Americans and return the rest if his bosses stopped treating staff "like slaves". *(AP)*

Colombia talks falter

Colombia's largest left-wing guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, has suspended peace talks with the Government, demanding that the authorities dismantle the *rightwing paramilitary* death *squads* who have resumed a terror campaign (Gabriella Gamini writes). President Pastrana said he regretted the premature end to talks, which he had hoped would become a central achievement of his administration.

24 die in religious riots

Jakarta: Rioters fired flaming arrows at places of worship and armed gangs blocked roads as violence among Christians and Muslims spread in eastern Indonesia. At least 24 people have died this week and almost 3,000 have fled their homes in Maluku province. The violence was the latest in a series of religious-related clashes amid social tensions caused by the nation's worst economic crisis in three decades. *(AP)*

Taleban clash kills 12

Islamabad: Afghan tribesmen clashed with Taleban militiamen in a southern border city after they were stopped from playing a traditional game of egg *fighting, leaving 12 people dead* and two wounded, a private news agency reported. The fighting broke out in Khost when tribesmen refused to obey a Taleban edict declaring the game, in which two participants each hold an egg and hit them together until one breaks, un-Islamic. *(AP)*

Italians launch attack on Nelson



'Brutal' British hero slaughtered rebels, writes **Richard Owen** in Rome

LORD NELSON was criticised yesterday by Italian historians, who branded him a war criminal who had used "brutal, bloodthirsty methods" to put down a revolt in Naples 200 years ago.

But British scholars defended the hero of Trafalgar, saying that his actions in Naples had to be understood "in the context of wider British strategic interests". Professor John Davis, who is writing an account of revolutionary Naples for Oxford University Press, said he understood Italian attitudes, but "anti-British sentiment" was misplaced.

At a three-day conference on the Jacobin revolution against the Bourbon rulers of Naples in 1799, Professor Gerardo Marotta, director of the Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies in Naples, said that it was time that Nelson's true role in executing the leaders of the revolt was "fully exposed".

Nelson had acted with great brutality, Professor Marotta, who describes himself as the last of the Neopolitan Jacobins, said. He added that Nelson had played a leading role in restoring the Bourbons, ending the 144-day republic by reneging on promises of safe conduct and engaging in "shameful wholesale slaughter" of the revolutionaries.



Nelson's fleet in the Bay of Naples in 1799. Controversy rages over his role in helping to put down an anti-monarchist uprising, tarnishing his heroic reputation, Italians claim

Nelson arrived in Naples in 1793 with orders to help to forge an anti-French pact with King Ferdinand I and Queen Maria Carolina, the Bourbon monarchs. His Naples years are perhaps best remembered for his passionate affair with Emma Hamilton, wife of Sir William Hamilton, the British Ambassador. But Nelson also played a key political role: he supported the King and Queen when the French invaded early in 1799 and encouraged anti-monarchist forces (led by disaffected noblemen) to stage a revolt.

Nelson took King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina to safety in Palermo in his own flagship and returned later to help monarchist forces led by Cardinal Fabrizio Ruffo to put down the uprising.

The conference, which is part of bicentenary celebrations marking the revolt, is being held at the Castel Sant' Elmo, the fortress on a hill above Naples where the routed revolutionaries took refuge.

Professor Davis, formerly Professor of History at Warwick University and now at Connecticut University, said that there was particular anger over the fact that the defeated rebels were enticed out of the fortress after being assured by Cardinal Ruffo that they would be given safe passage. "But Nelson did not feel bound by this and had them arrested the moment they emerged defenceless," he said.

Anti-Nelson feeling focuses on the fate of Admiral Francesco Caracciolo, who had served the monarchy but switched sides to back the rebels. He was sentenced to life imprisonment after a court martial held on Nelson's orders.

Nelson changed the sentence to death by hanging from the yardarm and refused to allow the body to be taken down until sunset. It was thrown into the sea, weighted with cannon balls. The corpse was buried after being washed up on a beach. According to some scholars, Nelson's dislike of the admiral was fuelled not only by his treachery but also by the fact that he had once slighted Lady Hamilton by refusing to dance with her.

Giuseppe Galasso, a leading Naples historian, said that Queen Maria Carolina had written to Lady Hamilton from Palermo asking her to tell Nelson to put down the revolt "as if he were crushing a rebel city in Ireland".

"He didn't need to be asked twice," Professor Galasso said. "The result has left an indelible stain on the reputation of a man whom the British regard as a hero."

Professor Davis said that he had read all of Nelson's correspondence at the time of the revolt and "I don't think he had a very clear idea of what he was getting into in terms of the internal politics of the Bourbon kingdom. He was a naval officer of his time, with a strong sense of discipline and a firm reaction to any form of insubordination."

Professor Davis said it was true that Nelson had broken his word over safe passage for the rebels, but the previous year he had won a famous victory over French forces at the Battle of the Nile. In Naples he was guided by the broader interest of obstructing the ambitions of Napoleonic France in the Mediterranean.

Nelson, top, and his lover, Lady Hamilton

Japan telescope focuses on infant universe

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

JAPANESE scientists say that a new infra-red telescope, the biggest yet built, could help to solve the mystery of how life was created.

The £210 million telescope will give scientists the best view so far of the universe in its infancy, according to Motohide Tamura of Japan's National Astronomical Observatory. "What is most exciting is that we expect to be able to observe the birth of newly born galaxies," he said.

Called Subaru after the Japanese word for the star cluster Pleiades, the telescope's large size was made possible by technological innovations. At its heart is an American-made reflector with a diameter of 8.2m (27ft), supported by Japanese computer-controlled arms to compensate for gravity and temperature variations. The system ensures that the flexible mirror — only 20cm (8in) thick — preserves a curvature of staggering precision. If sited in London, the telescope could pinpoint and measure precisely a tennis ball in Swindon.

The telescope, equipped with a highly accurate tracking system, will be able to locate stars in both the visible and infra-red wavelengths, greatly extending the limits of the observable universe.

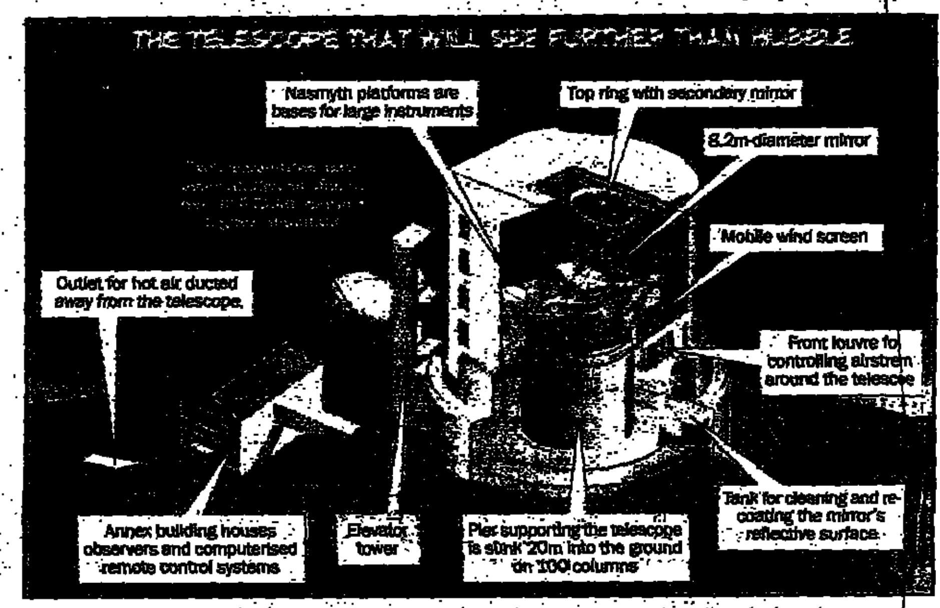
Scientists in Japan say the Subaru will out-perform America's Hubble telescope — though this has the advantage of being above the Earth's atmosphere — because it can collect more light than the space telescope. Hubble has been able to confirm hundreds of previously unknown galaxies with its reach of about ten billion light years. Subaru will be capable of focusing up to 12 billion light years away.

Professor Tamura says it will also enable scientists to observe directly planetary systems outside the solar system — the existence of which was discovered in 1995. "Until 1995 we did not know of any planetary system outside our solar system," the professor said. "But in 1995 the first example of the extrasolar planet was discovered. The next step is somehow to observe directly those kind of extrasolar planets."

Scientists are also excited by the prospect of detecting the first generation of celestial objects which cooled from the primordial gas, which are predicted to be galaxies in their initial star-forming phase. "We will not be able to see the beginnings of the universe itself, which may be 15 billion light years away, or 20 billion. But now we hope to be able to observe the infant universe," Professor Tamura said.

NET LINKS

www.subaru.nao.ac.jp — home page of the Subaru telescope.
www.com/misc/hubble_sites.html — links to Hubble space telescope sites.
sol.stsci.edu/~mutchler/HST-model.html — how to make a model of the Hubble Telescope.



'Cheap billionaire' feeds his daughter on $3 a day


Duff: wants $50,000 a month child support

Multimillionaires end up quibbling over cents, writes **Ian Brodie**

THE chairman of Revlon cosmetics, Ronald Perelman, was chided yesterday for being New York's cheapest billionaire after saying that he can feed his four-year-old daughter for $3 (£1.82) a day.

The remark came in exchanges during a cantankerous court hearing to decide how much Mr Perelman, 55, should pay in child support to his third former wife, Patricia Duff, 44, a wealthy socialite, to whom he was married for 18 months. As Judge Franklin Weissberg remarked: "We're in uncharted waters here. There aren't too many cases where a billionaire and a multimillionaire slug it out."

Indeed, the hearing was just the kind of clash enjoyed by New York's tabloid media. "It won't take a lotta bread to feed my kid," blared a headline in the *New York Post*, which also coined the "cheapest billionaire" comment.

Jim Haggerty, a spokesman for Ms Duff, added his two cents' worth by saying: "Ron Perelman lives like the Sultan of Brunei and has the nerve to quibble about how much he should support his child."

Mr Perelman, one of America's richest men, agreed that his worth was "approximately $6 billion". He described a life of private jet, yachts, luxury holidays and a string of lavish homes and estates from Manhattan to Long Island, Palm Beach and Los Angeles.

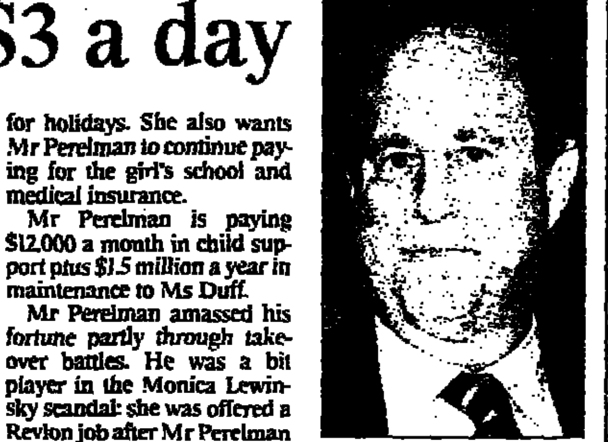
Yet when his daughter Caleigh comes to stay with him, Mr Perelman said in evidence, she eats $3 worth of food a day: chicken fingers, hot dogs, cereal for breakfast, hamburgers and some pasta.

"Three dollars? So about $1,000 a year would be appropriate?" asked William Beslow, Ms Duff's lawyer. "Yes," Mr Perelman replied.

Figures from the US Department of Agriculture show that $3.07 a day was the national average last year for a "low-cost" home-cooked food plan for a four-year-old. Mr Perelman has a full-time chef on his staff. Ms Duff is seeking $50,000 a month in child support, including $40,000 to rent a New York flat, a second car, $60,000 a year for a nanny, extra household help and cash for holidays. She also wants Mr Perelman to continue paying for the girl's school and medical insurance.

Mr Perelman is paying $12,000 a month in child support plus $1.5 million a year in maintenance to Ms Duff.

Mr Perelman amassed his fortune partly through takeover battles. He was a bit player in the Monica Lewinsky scandal: she was offered a Revlon job after Mr Perelman was contacted by Vernon Jordan, the President's friend.


Perelman: "lives like Sultan of Brunei"

Senate veteran goes into battle for friend Bill

By Bronwen Maddox in Washington

PRESIDENT Clinton called on an old Arkansas friend yesterday to mount the last, impassioned speech for his defence, as the White House team ditched its low-key approach, and cranked up emotion and rhetoric for a final attack. Dale Bumpers, 73, like Mr Clinton a former Governor of Arkansas, and a senator for 24 years, arrived on Capitol Hill yesterday to do battle for his friend and protégé.

Yesterday marked the anniversary of the start of the Lewinsky scandal, when accounts of the President's friendship with the young trainee first broke, adding to the nation's favourite catchphrase lines such as "Sir, the girl is here with the pizza". But after a year of tortuous drama, the President's fate could be settled as early as Monday, when Democrats want to hold a blunt "Yes" or "No" vote on whether to scrap the trial on the two articles of impeachment against Mr Clinton.

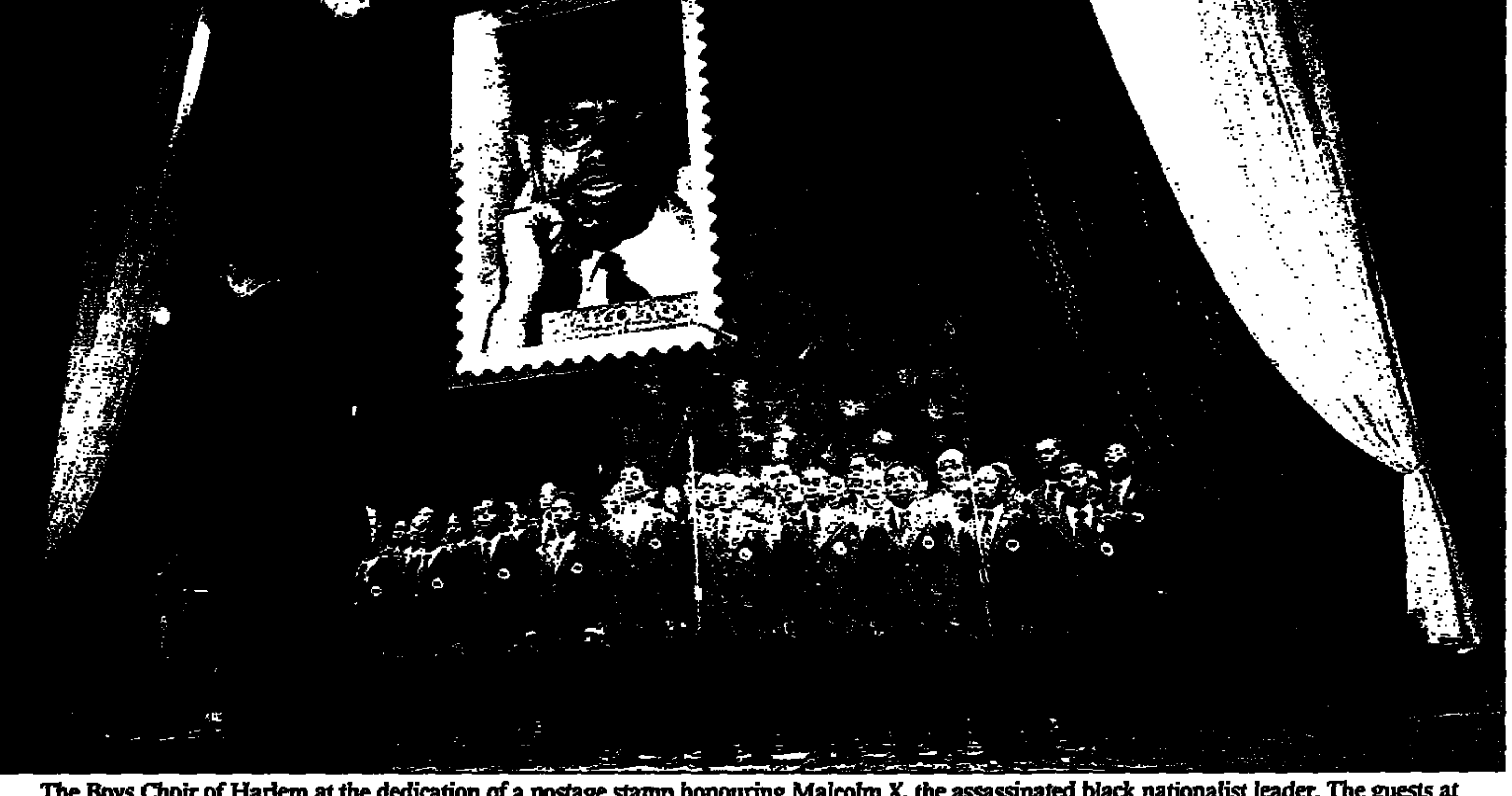
Expectations are that Republicans, who hold a 55-45 advantage in the Senate, would squash that bid. But with Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott pressing to wrap up the trial by mid-February, there is a widespread sense that Republicans are losing their appetite for stretching it out. In deploying Mr Bumpers to close the President's case, the White House pitched straight at the public's lack of enthusiasm for a long trial. Folksy but civilised, an old-fashioned liberal Democrat but also a tough, trained lawyer with a love of a courtroom brawl, Mr Bumpers can be relied on to deliver a powerful, populist speech. A huge, white-haired man, with a booming voice, he is hard to ignore.

A much-loved figure in the Senate, Mr Bumpers became a political star when he dislodged the famous Orval Faubus in running for Governor, and then ousted the distinguished William Fulbright, one of Mr Clinton's political mentors, from his Senate seat. But he won many friends on the other side of the aisle during his tenure. Asa Hutchinson, a Republican Representative for Arkansas, and a member of the House team prosecuting Mr Clinton, described him this week with approval as "excellent — just an old country lawyer".


Bumpers: folksy liberal and tough lawyer

In Mr Clinton's defence, deputy White House counsel Cheryl Mills, 33, the first woman to take the floor in the trial, said the prosecution was wrong to focus on whether the President had lied in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, because the House had thrown out that charge against him. Ms Mills is seen as strengthening Mr Clinton's already formidable appeal to women. She appealed to senators to overlook Mr Clinton's flaws. "We've had imperfect leaders in the past, and we'll have imperfect leaders in the future," she said, but their imperfections did not stop "the march for civil rights and equal opportunity".

New polls show that the President's job approval ratings following his State of the Union speech on Tuesday are near their all-time high-point — up to 76 per cent in one survey.


The Boys Choir of Harlem at the dedication of a postage stamp honouring Malcolm X, the assassinated black nationalist leader. The guests at the presentation in the Apollo Theatre, Harlem, included his six daughters. The 33-cent stamp is the 22nd in the Black Heritage series

'Son of Star Wars' targets rogue states' missiles

From Ian Brodie in Washington

IN A major shift of American policy, the Clinton Administration has decided to develop a "Son of Star Wars" defence against missile attacks by North Korea and other rogue nations.

President Clinton has written to President Yeltsin asking to renegotiate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, a bedrock of early arms control agreements, so that America can build a limited national system of missile defences.

Initial reaction from Moscow was discouraging. China also raised objections. But in Washington, William Cohen, the Secretary of Defence, said that if Russia would not agree to changes, America had the option of simply withdrawing from the treaty on six months' notice.

The Administration will request $10.5 billion (£6.4 billion) from Congress over the next six years for the research, testing and building of the new anti-missile defence system. "We cannot afford to fail," Mr Cohen said. Washington's concerns were aroused initially by a government commission that issued a warning of the rapid spread of missile technology to such countries as North Korea, Iraq and Iran.

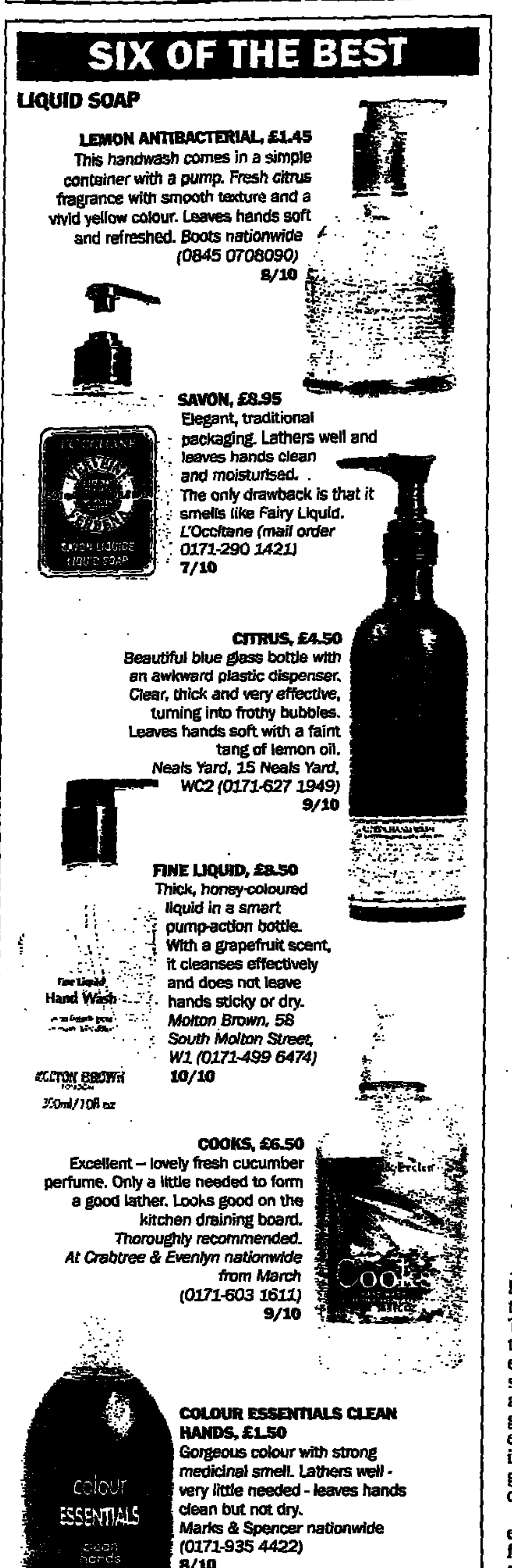
The caution was underlined dramatically last August when North Korea launched a three-stage rocket called Taepo-Dong I that demonstrated a potential for reaching the US mainland. "This is not an abstract, theoretical threat," said the Pentagon's top officer, General Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Rather, it was a real threat that would pose a danger not only to American troops overseas, but also to Americans at home.

In 1983, former President Reagan launched his Stars Wars programme to build a national shield against Soviet missile attack. The project cost $40 billion but never came close to reality. The concept of dozens of missiles in space that could instantly intercept Soviet ICBMs was a technical and software challenge that American scientists could not crack. The new plan is modest by comparison. It envisages satellite sensors to spot the exhaust of hostile missile launches immediately after lift-off, but the interceptor missiles will be based on Earth, not in space.

The network of early-warning radars — in Alaska, California and Massachusetts — would track the flight path of any incoming missile. Interceptors travelling at 25,000mph would home in on the missile and destroy it by firing small rockets.

SIX OF THE BEST

LIQUID SOAP



LEMON ANTIBACTERIAL, £1.45
This handwash comes in a simple container with a pump. Fresh citrus fragrance with smooth texture and a vivid yellow colour. Leaves hands soft and refreshed. Boots nationwide *(0845 0708090)*
8/10

SAVON, £8.95
Elegant, traditional packaging. Lathers well and leaves hands clean and moisturised. The only drawback is that it smells like Fairy Liquid. *L'Occitane (mail order 0171-290 1421)*
7/10

CITRUS, £4.50
Beautiful blue glass bottle with an awkward plastic dispenser. Clear, thick and very effective, turning into frothy bubbles. Leaves hands soft with a faint tang of lemon oil. *Neals Yard, 15 Neals Yard, WC2 (0171-627 1949)*
9/10

FINE LIQUID, £8.50
Thick, honey-coloured liquid in a smart pump-action bottle. With a grapefruit scent, it cleanses effectively and does not leave hands sticky or dry. *Molton Brown, 58 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-499 6474)*
10/10

COOKS, £6.50
Excellent – lovely fresh cucumber perfume. Only a little needed to form a good lather. Looks good on the kitchen draining board. *Thoroughly recommended. At Crabtree & Evenlyn nationwide from March (0171-603 1611)*
9/10

COLOUR ESSENTIALS CLEAN HANDS, £1.50
Gorgeous colour with strong medicinal smell. Lathers well - very little needed - leaves hands clean but not dry. Marks & Spencer nationwide (0171-935 4422)
8/10

COMPILED BY DEBORAH BRETT

'I feel that it is my duty to make them the latest addition to the Shilling Glove Orphanage'



In love with gloves

CUTTING EDGE
JANE SHILLING

Every so often I wonder what sort of life a Martian might think I led were one to land his spaceship on my roof and take a look in my top drawer. There he would find a collection of lace, ribbon and enamel buttons, lengths of veiling sprinkled with velvet bows, and elbow-length white kid gloves sufficient to keep an entire ballroom-full of Edwardian débutantes and their dowager mamas supplied for years on end.

I know that there are women — some of them are my best friends — who don't care for this kind of pretty trash. It's not just that they don't feel the need for it. They actively dislike it. The sight of a faded kid glove lovingly entwined with a necklace of paste brilliants and a scrap of cherry-red silk-velvet ribbon speaks to them not of Chopin nocturnes and Chekhovian melancholy but of clutter, woolly thinking and bad feng shui.

Even I, in one of my periodic fits of minimalism, have been known to tip the contents of this drawer on to my bed with a view to returning the whole lot to the Oxfam shop from which it mostly came. Somehow this resolution is never carried out. Something stays my hand. But what is it?

Partly it is a sense of history. That pair of superfine milk-chocolate suede gauntlets, marked on the inside wrist in spidery copperplate "Made in France, size 6½" — through what adventures did they pass before ending up in the dusty old gloves' home of a London charity shop? Whose little hand fleshed out the narrow, pointed fingers of those powder-pink, full-length evening gloves with their elegant white piping, fiddly pearl buttons and faint, melancholy scent of mothballs? They are gloves to go dancing in. They must have been worn while love affairs began and ended, proposals were made and rejected. Or perhaps they belonged to a girl who hated dances and sat in the cloakroom all evening fiddling with those pink pearl buttons until she could escape . . .

I am so hopelessly in thrall to the pathetic fallacy that in shops where gloves are sold I find myself attributing personalities to the merchandise and feeling that it is my duty to take home such and such a pair — as though I were Mia Farrow and the gloves a gaggle of Vietnamese orphans.

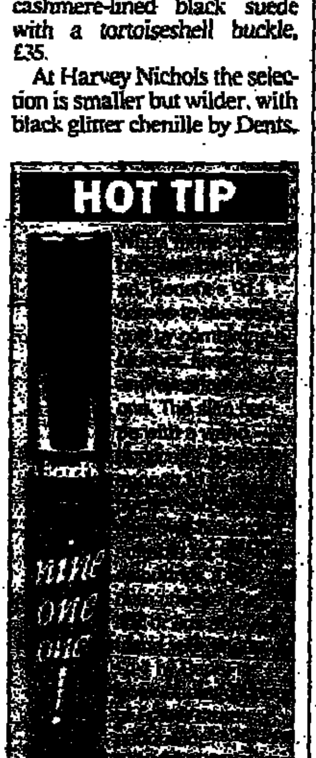
In these circumstances, the best thing to do is to keep away from glove shops altogether — especially the King's Road, a particular danger zone, with Brora (where luxurious cashmere gloves are now reduced to £10) at one end, and at the other Peter Jones, whose repertoire encompasses a vast range, from dove-grey sheepskin mittens, £12.95, to shocking-pink kid lined with silk, £29.50, and fine black suede elegantly ruched at the wrist, £35.

Convinced that a hard winter lies ahead, I found myself fingering over hand-stitched charcoal lambskin with a pale grey lining, £35, tan lambskin with a cream fur cuff, £45, black Italian leather gauntlets lined with rabbit fur, £35, and cashmere-lined black suede with a tortoiseshell buckle, £35.

At Harvey Nichols the selection is smaller but wilder, with black glitter chenille by Dents, £12.95, and a handsome pair of three-quarter-length silk-lined black nappa leather gloves, £60. There is an exuberant range of designs by Moschino, from relatively sedate knitted styles in fringed black mohair, £34.95, and lacy-knit red wool with an orchid-pink scalloped cuff, £33.95, to *fin de siècle* elegance — a black suede gauntlet with a jet-beaded cuff, £95 — and an extravagant pair of heart-on-hand styles, in black kid with white top-stitching and a bright red heart motif, £75, or zebra-striped ponyskin with the same red heart, £95.

At this level, gloves begin to cross the boundary between garment and *objet d'art*. Those from Hermès fall firmly into the latter category, particularly the white kid summer glove with a little linen handkerchief tucked into its cuff, and the child's berry-red sheepskin mitten, gaily embroidered with golden trumpets and musical notes — an article so enticing that only the humiliating prospect of a Cinderella-style struggle to force my adult hand into its infantile contours prevented me from making it the latest addition to the Shilling Glove Orphanage.

HOT TIP



Objects of desire



The secret world of an embassy wife

No one suspected that Catherine Manning, for more than 20 years the perfect diplomatic hostess, was leading a double life. Interview by **Grace Bradberry**



SIMON BROOKE-WEBB

Catherine Manning: all the attributes of the ideal ambassador's wife — plus a talent for concealment and crime writing

Catherine Manning, the wife of David Manning, until recently Ambassador to Israel, is that rare thing, a diplomatic wife happy to live in her husband's shadow. She has done it for 24 years now, apparently without complaint. But then, Catherine Manning has a dark and thrilling secret: she is an award-winning crime writer.

For 15 years, she kept this other life to herself. When in England, she would occasionally attend crime-writers' dinners, introducing herself by her nom de plume, Elizabeth Ironside. When on the diplomatic circuit, she would be queen of the canapés, mistress of the official crockery — "an English porcelain, white with a gold crest on it," she says, in her soft, trilling voice.

It was in Israel that this carefully structured plot unravelled. "I was still trying both to write and to be the Ambassador's wife, and I threw on a dress and went to a dinner. A woman asked me what I did. Eventually I told her. She said: 'Oh, I *knew* you were very busy because of the state of your hands.' She'd noticed that they hadn't been manicured. Of course, *she* had beautifully manicured nails."

Yet Catherine Manning is the sort of woman who would always look "well turned-out". We meet in a sparse, cream flat, within a grandiose apartment block in South London. Inside the vestibule, the stucco work has been restored. In short, it's oddly like an embassy. Manning does not disgrace the setting. She looks as if she might have been born in a cashmere sweater similar to the one she is wearing.

Appearances are deceptive. The Mannings are renting, until the tenants move out of their Chelsea home — her husband was posted back to London slightly earlier than expected. And far from being born to this kind of life, Catherine grew up in a Northamptonshire village, where her mother was a social worker and her father a GP. "It was a *Manchester Guardian*-reading household," she says.

Her father died while she was in her teens and the family endured straitened circumstances. Educated at a grammar school, she went up to Oxford aged only 17. There she met her husband, went to lots of parties, and formed no idea of what she wanted to do next. At the age of 23, she married and, since David Manning had joined the Foreign Office, this answered the question. "The moment we decided to get married, I did a teaching qualification, because I thought it would be useful." This was her only career plan.

The first posting was Warsaw, in the mid-Seventies. Her husband learnt to speak Polish, she managed only a little. "I think I was really miserable and the thing that saved me was meeting a Polish historian who was writing a book on Conrad. I became a sort of literary assistant."

So, as her husband concentrated on his first posting, she found other intellectual diversions. "That's been true in every job he's been in — his focus has been different from mine. He was thinking in political or economic terms, whereas I was thinking in human terms."

Traditionally, diplomatic wives have found a focus in their children. But as other wives fell pregnant, for Catherine that didn't happen.

"I couldn't have children," she says, carefully. "It *was* a source of regret and, for a time, of real sadness. But you can't spend your whole life regretting one condition. I went through it and came out at the other side, and left that particular thing behind."

She began writing her first novel, set in India (her husband's second foreign posting), when she was 30. "We'd just bought a house and we were completely broke," she says. "But I did it partly to pass the time, too." Her husband parcelled up the manuscript and sent it to an agent, picked from the *Artists' and Writers' Yearbook* for no other reason than that the surname began with A. The agent quickly placed the book, and *A Very Private Enterprise* won the Crime Writers' Association first novel award.

Had she turned to writing to fill a void? "It might be that I started to write at a moment when really I should have . . ." she begins. "I mean, I'd been married long enough . . . it was quite clear that if I was going to have children, then I should have had them by then, and I wasn't going to."

One has to admire a woman who could respond to such a crushing discovery by becoming an award-winning novelist. During her husband's third posting — to Paris — she also polished off a history doctorate. Not the least formidable, and, frankly, rather shy, she is the kind of resourceful wife that Foreign Office mandarins must adore. "David is always very dedicated to his work," she says. "Which means you could spend your time twiddling your thumbs — or you could do something yourself."

The Mannings were in Moscow from 1990 to 1993. It was a scary period, though not, apparently for Catherine Manning. "They were the best years there since 1917," she says with glee. "During August 1991, when the coup took place, I walked every day with my dog down to the barricades."

> 'I couldn't have children. It was a source of regret'

They lived in a rented house with "a KGB man on the door who noted every time one went in and out." Later, people were so concerned about security they would beg to have a policeman outside their door.

During this period she wrote her second novel, *Death in the Garden*, which was shortlisted for the Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger award. Back in England, she completed her third, *The Accomplice*, mostly about Russia. Naively, she thought that her first stint as an ambassadress, in Israel, would provide her best opportunity yet to get on with her writing.

"I ought to have known better, but I started out thinking: 'This is wonderful. I'm going to an interesting country, to live in a lovely house, and there are staff. I shall work during the day, and give receptions in the evening.'" Officially, there was no reason she should not have approached it in this way. "The Foreign Office is now absolutely politically correct on this. There is no pressure on wives to do anything connected with their husbands' jobs. That's the theory. The practice for ambassadors' wives is very different."

It was wonderful, she says, to meet the key political players in Israel. (Though she confesses: "To tell you the truth, Israel is a country without small talk.") But her writing suffered. Finally, she decided to retreat to their house in France for six months each year, where she wrote her latest novel, *The Art of Deception*, a tale of money-laundering and murder set in Moscow and Knightsbridge.

In truth, there seems to be a part of Catherine Manning which enjoys if not deception, then secrecy and subterfuge. She clearly rather enjoyed having two lives. Then her publishers pointed out that, in today's world, merely writing books was not enough. You had to publicise them.

"I'd never had a launch party until I went to Israel. People just assume you're an ambassador's wife and that's it. It didn't bother me. But while we were in Israel, David gave a party for *The Accomplice*. He did it as a private person, and had invitations printed from David Manning, for the launch of Elizabeth Ironside's book. Lots of people came and realised that was me only when they arrived." She recounts this with the relish of a spy whose cover was never blown.

● The Art of Deception, *by Elizabeth Ironside, New English Library, £5.99.*

Starters for No 10

Many people think that just because Tony Blair promised his constituents in Sedgefield that his favourite dish is takeaway fish and chips, but has now also told compilers of *The Islington Cookbook* that he likes nothing better than "fresh fettucine garnished with an exotic sauce of olive oil, sun-dried tomatoes and capers", then he must be some kind of shameless chameleon who changes to woo whomever he happens to be with. Well, that's certainly what *I* think.

But this culinary misunderstanding has made Blair anxious about his image.

Or, as he put it to Frank Bruno at a Downing Street cocktail party last night: "They're trying to stitch me up good 'n' proppa, ain't it Frankie, makin' me out to be a Zelig of the food world, like in tha' Woody Allen movie, know wo' I mean, Harry?" before turning with his other face to Michael Caine, from whom he sought some moral support by pleading: "Mike, you know me mate. I'm jis mum 'n' dad — mad! — about me fish 'n' chips. But not a lotta people know vat."

But Tony understands that the days when people changed the way they spoke simply in order to blend in with whomever they were talking to are, like, so five minutes ago. That was last year's political fashion, which Tony flaunted so flamboyantly on the *Des O'Connor Show* last June, when he told us all how he loves to play footie with "the kids" and how, on a holiday in France: "They pu' on a lit'le show for us, with the mayor of the lit'le village."

Then Blair got a pager message from Alastair Campbell explaining that *everyone* speaks Estuary English now, and the latest focus group findings showed that "you are what you eat" was the new mantra on voters' lips.

This is why — whereas an American President might be followed around a crowded room by a pair of discreet bodyguards — Tony Blair, at his Downing Street cocktail parties, is accompanied by a pair of discreet waitresses.

One carries a tray of food, the other a tray of drinks. Approaching John Prescott, say, Tony grabs himself a half of Tetley's and a cheese-and-pickle bap. As he moves on to Kate Moss, Tony's already nibbling on a rocket leaf and sipping vodka and cranberry juice, swiftly swapping these for an asparagus quiche tartlet and a Malibu and blackcurrant when it's time to get the lowdown on the world of showbiz from *Supermarket Sweep*'s Dale Winton.

Because of his hectic lifestyle, Blair now employs a full-time social dietician to orchestrate his schedule in a way that enables him to blend in gastronomically with whomever he happens to be dining. If you would like to try the Blair diet as part of your new year makeover, here are a few examples of what Tony eats, and in whos company:

MAN UNDERNEATH

JOE JOSEPH

Paddy Ashdown: With Paddy, Tony makes a point of eating neither fish nor fowl, but something in between. Like Ashdown, Tony has this week vowed to hand over the responsibility of eating food to someone else — but not for six months!

Mike Tyson: Tony likes to take a bite out of Mike's ear.

Peter Mandelson: Tony tends to choose lobster, making sure the restaurant bill is sent to Geoffrey Robinson.

John Humphrys: Blair often joins the *Today* presenter in eating a Cabinet minister for breakfast.

Robin Cook: The evening frequently ends with the two of them rolling around the floor of Chevening's drawing room, empty brandy bottles scattered about them like bowling pins.

David Owen: Anything, as long as it's between 9am and 11.30am, or 5pm to 7pm.

Richard Rogers: Tony orders seabass — just so long as all the bones have been repositioned on the *outside* of the fish, and the whole dish is served under a spectacular glass canopy.

Gordon Brown: With Gordon, Tony is scrupulous about cutting the cake straight down the middle, but still somehow manages to end up with the bigger half. But, hey babe, that's the way the cookie crumbles, as Tony was telling his buddy Bill Clinton only the other day.

Send in the mercenaries, Mr Cook

Sam Kiley on why the Sierra Leone leader must not fall

Robin Cook would rather we all forgot about Sandline. The Foreign Secretary does not welcome reminders of the role played by this mercenary outfit in Sierra Leone.

Sandline may have co-operated with British diplomats to help to restore the lawfully elected President Kabbah to his rightful position as Sierra Leone's head of state. But, we are asked to believe, it was all without Mr Cook's knowledge. Sir Thomas Legg's inquiry cleared him of any wrongdoing, it seems. That, he hopes, is an end of it. Well, it shouldn't be.

Whether or not Sandline was implementing British policy then, it is quite clear that it should be now. The Foreign Secretary should learn from the events of last year. The redeployment of mercenaries in this blighted nation would be an act of genuinely ethical foreign policy.

Sierra Leone is once again teetering between democracy and criminal dementia. Charles Taylor, Liberia's President, is trying to take over the country with a mercenary group much more sinister than the London-based Sandline. He has hired 300 Ukrainians, along with other African dogs of war, in an effort to turn the nation into his private fiefdom.

Mr Taylor and his henchmen plan to get their hands on the country's enormously valuable resources of diamonds and rutile. They then propose to hand power to their creatures in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, is on death row in Freetown for his past atrocities. There is a lot of competition for the title of Africa's most malevolent militia, but in this crowded field the RUF stands out.

Mr Sankoh's sidekick, Sam Bockarie, is a former hairdresser and professional disco-dancer turned butcher. He joined the opportunistic RUF thugs when a lorry carrying volunteers drove past him while he was idling at an Abidjan bus stop four years ago. The antics of the RUF leaders, and their allies in the deposed junta forces, would be blackly comic in an Evelyn Waugh sense if they were not bleakly murderous on a massive scale.

Eastern Freetown has been razed by the rebels. Their scorched earth tactics and the staggering level of their atrocities blight much of this country. Yesterday the rebels were seen cutting off the hands of civilians fleeing their path. Refugees talk of wholesale slaughter by the rebels, piles of bodies in the streets, and all-night partying by drug-crazed pre-teen killers. The rebels have to be stopped, and soon.

This is where Mr Cook can salvage a little honour from the Sandline affair. This week, while the British Government continued to put pressure on President Kabbah to negotiate with the rebels, British forces have been keeping a weather eye on matters. A brigadier, David Richards, carried out reconnaissance in Freetown and has returned to brief Mr *Cook's Cabinet committee. He is likely to convey the message from both Mr Kabbah and his West African allies in Ecomog, that a ceasefire and negotiations are out of the question while the rebels hold the diamond-rich East.*

It is clear that jaw-jaw will not work if the rebels are allowed to maintain their grip on the diamond mines. The gems can be mined by anyone with a shovel. The rebels can generate tens of millions of pounds to fund their massacres. Talks while the rebels remain in possession of these resources will only strengthen the rebels' hands.

What the legitimate President and his allies need is air support to hit rebel bases from the rear. Without air support, Ecomog's armour and infantry can fight only a limited war of attrition, unable to strike behind the rebel lines.

It is in Britain's interest to see that air support, and additional military muscle, are supplied. We have a moral duty to maintain the President whose election we backed. But this crisis affects more than one country. If the Ecomog forces were to lose on the battlefields of Sierra Leone, a domino effect could harm the cause of progress throughout West Africa. Nigeria's own transition to democracy would be jeopardised.

> Mr Cook can now salvage honour from Sandline

Britain cannot help directly. It does not have the type of helicopter gunships that would be useful in Sierra Leone. It is, in any case, extremely unlikely that the Government would order Crown forces straight into an African bloodfest.

But there is an alternative. In 1997, President Kabbah had almost routed the rebels with the help of Executive Outcomes, a South African mercenary company. With 146 soldiers of fortune and one M124 helicopter gunship, he had all but finished them off. But pressure from abroad forced the President to cancel that contract. As the mercenaries left, they predicted that Mr Kabbah's rule would last 90 days. He was ousted after 80.

Britain, and her Western partners, can now help Sierra Leone by hiring a company like Executive Outcomes, *Sandline, or any one of a number of British security firms operating in Africa. Such an organisation could bring those badly needed helicopters to fight in Freetown and beyond. The Sierra Leone Government cannot afford to do so. In all honour, we cannot afford not to.*

At no risk to British soldiers and equipment. Mr Cook can practise private-sector peacekeeping. He should authorise the deployment of mercenaries to help Ecomog to drive the rebels out of Sierra Leone. That, after all, is what the Foreign Office thought was a good idea a year ago. This time one can only hope that Mr Cook learns from the past, instead of trying to forget it.

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Mary Ann Sieghart returns next week.



The camera often lies

'True story' films should carry a Mostly Untrue certificate from the censors

Simon Jenkins

I can see it already. "Paddy and Jane" is the true but tormented tale of a soldier turned politician. This Wellingtonian figure is a man of dazzling but flawed genius. Told through the eyes of his former secretary, the film uses their affair as a metaphor of political turmoil. Paddy, portrayed by Kenneth Branagh, is caught between wife and mistress, Labour and Tory, Charles Kennedy and Tony Blair. He draws on his SBS training to survive each crisis. We are assured that the sex scenes are "courageous and explicit . . . intended to convey a deeper kind of truth". Ten provincial reps are closed to supply the Arts Council grant.

The film *Hilary and Jackie*, initiated by the sister of Jacqueline du Pré, is a similar melodrama of rivalry and love. It is rescued from sentimentality only by Emily Watson's acting and frequent mercy dashes by Elgar. Whether the remorselessly unpleasant scenes are all true cannot be judged, since du Pré is dead. Most of her friends and admirers believe she has been defamed by an angst-ridden sister and brother-in-law. Certainly any shred of dignity or niceness has been edited out. This being a film, *much is made of sex and the whole confection is called "true", a word almost devoid of meaning in movies. The film was incomprehensibly subsidised by the British taxpayer.*

This is a road much trodden, and much littered with cant. Scholarly pens are sharpened over Shakespeare in Love, a film of Tom Stoppard's charming fiction that a randy Elizabethan poet called William Shakespeare had writer's block during a play called Romeo and Juliet. From this he was deliciously rescued by Gwyneth Paltrow, leaving us for ever in her debt. There is no evidence that any of this happened, but so what? Stoppard makes no claim to veracity. Nor does the dazzling designer-Tudor floorshow, Elizabeth, currently on general release. Some myths are invulnerable to correction.

There is no evidence for half of history, and even less for the hack history of the film industry. *Gandhi* was a travesty of the British Raj. *Amadeus* was not about the real Mozart. *The Music Lovers* was not about the real Tchaikovsky. Closer to our time, Oliver Stone's *JFK* gave a false account of the killing of Kennedy. Jim Sheridan's *In the Name of the Father* was a false account of the Guildford Four. The "true" portrait of C. S. Lewis in *Shadowlands* was mostly fiction. The "true story" of *Schindler's List* was unrecognisable to those who were present at the scenes depicted. The whole genre of docudrama, of faction, reconstruction and "based on" stories, treats real people and incidents as a mere raw material for directorial fancy. Yet such is the power of film that these versions will determine for ever how most people view their patch of history. Sir Thomas More will always be the *Man for All Seasons*.

The film-makers blow a raspberry to any complaint. We are artists, they cry. We can use facts any way we like. They are slaves to our talent, worker bees to be exploited and discarded. The monstrous regiment of historians, fact-checkers and pedants can get lost. Art need recognise no laws but those of its own genius. "What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth." Or as Keats would have said today, you can whinge, we have the Arts Council grant.

I once wrote an article in which I unwittingly told an untruth about a public figure. I had suggested that he was present at a meeting when he was not, and thus wrongly attributed to him an unworthy decision. The accusation was not grievous and no great harm was done. But I was wrong. Both the law and the code of practice required me to apologise and make amends. *Even when racing the clock, journalists must build on a foundation of truth. I might have dismissed the complaint on the ground that mine was a work of art. I might have pleaded that my prose strove not after a spurious and small-minded accuracy, but after the "divine melodious truth" of the nightingale that is forever Fleet Street. I would have been carted off to the Clink.*

Carlton was recently fined an astonishing £2 million by the Independent Television Commission for including fabricated material in a documentary on drug trafficking. "The deception," said the ITC, "involved a wholesale breach of trust between the programme-makers and the viewers." *The company did not disagree, gulped and paid up. Film journalists who make offerings at the altar of history are tested by stern standards. Not so feature film-makers. I venture to suggest that if Carlton had sent its work round to Channel 4 and claimed it to be a "true story" art film, it would not have been fined for fabrication, but showered with praise and lottery cash.*

The cobbler *should* stick to his last. Art's contribution to history is to reveal its hidden strands through the prism of fiction. The wrongs of British policy in Northern Ireland were more effectively exposed in *The Crying Game* than by Mr Sheridan's Guildford Four faction. The best study of Watergate was the fictional *Washington Behind Closed Doors*, not the many films depicting Nixon as a monster and purporting to tell "the truth". Admirers of du Pré know that the most moving evocation of a musician's struggle against multiple sclerosis was in Tom Kempinski's fine play, *Duet for One*. For all the interviews given by the makers of *Hilary and Jackie*, their motive is unclear. If it was meant as a fictional study of the agony of genius, why drag a real person's character through the mud? If it was to be a biography of du Pré — as it seems to the public — surely there was some obligation to accuracy and balance?

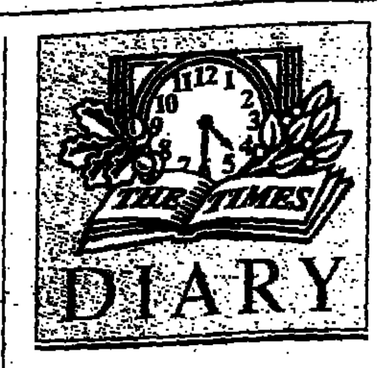
When art thus moves its tanks on to the lawn of truth, the defenders seem to turn and run. The so-called drama documentaries by Stone and Sheridan were far more culpable acts of public deception than the Carlton documentary. They used fabricated scenes and dialogue, intercut with documentary footage, to imply as fact what they knew was fiction. Such falsity was said in both cases to be avowedly propagandist, to expose the falsity of others. These artists demand a licence to expose the lies of others. This is the ultimate *trahison des clercs*. In my view the same goes for the portrayal of du Pré as a genius of unredeemed nastiness.

When art has exhausted its imaginative powers and has to borrow real people from real life, it should accept the disciplines of history and journalism. These are not only the laws of libel, but codes and protocols of accuracy, fairness and respect for the dignity and privacy of individuals, both living and dead. Of course journalism often falls far short of these disciplines, but it at least acknowledges a framework of self-discipline. Film-makers respect nothing. Constrained only by laws against defaming living persons (letting Daniel Barenboim off the *Hilary and Jackie* hook), they can lie with impunity and without redress.

Art's rejoinder to this purism is to cry Censorship! It depends what we mean by the censor, a wolf who comes in many disguises. The ITC was "censoring" Carlton in fining it for its drugs story. The laws of libel and racial and religious discrimination are censorship. So too are those controlling copyright, advertising and public deception. On this basis alone the British Board of Film Classification should surely demand the removal of the words "true story" from films which are blatantly nothing of the sort. At very least it should have a new MU certificate, meaning Mostly Untrue.

Yet censorship is not the best defence against artistic mendacity, it is the worst. The best defence is to declaim its lies from the rooftops. By all means let Hilary give her version of her sister's sad tale, if she must. By all means add in the sex, the profanity, the terminal illness and Elgar's Cello Concerto, if they are the only means to an audience. By all means call the product art. *But the rest of us need not stand on the ceremony of that art. Truth comes first. If film-makers claim a licence to damn the living and the dead, they must get damnation in return.*

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Baby reds

BABY BALLS are to be taken to the heart of the Labour Establishment. Its most glamorous couple are about to embark on the founding of a dynasty. Yvette Cooper (right) wife of Ed Balls, Gordon Brown's sharpshooter, is expecting in June.

The MP is the latest "Blair babe" to reproduce. She follows Claire Curtis-Thomas, Debra Shipley, Jacqui Smith and Ruth Kelly (left). Yvette purrs: "This year is going to be big for Ed and me. We are really pleased. The only problem is I couldn't drink much over Christmas to celebrate."

Ever a power person, Cooper has told her local party she will campaign in the European elections until she drops. Poor baby.



● *KATE THORNTON of* Top of the Pops *pedigree has attacked genteel Cheltenham. She suggests that the twee spa town is really home for white trash. "Not being pregnant by 14 made me stand out," she says. "I suffered bullying. When I go back home I drive past those people in my nice car. I see them pushing their buggies and I think 'Well, who's the smart one?'."*

Tory benefits

KNOW a Conservative in need? A fund for distressed Tory folk is being wound up by Sir Archibald Hamilton's 1922 Committee. The search has started for worthy final recipients and as the party lost 171 seats last time there could be a few takers. The fund was established in 1975 "to help former Tory members and their *surviving spouses who find themselves in difficulty*".

Marion Roe, MP, chief pension officer, says: "The House has its own arrangements now. We are looking to distribute the balance, so anyone who knows of worthy causes, contact us." Make the queue orderly now, please.

● *A PORTRAIT of Hitler by that thirsty dog, Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, is being flogged by his widow. It's a riot of missing features mired in yellow and blue. Lady Sam became chief beneficiary of Nicky's will on his deathbed, at the expense of his daughters. Lady S is to emigrate to Mexico having enjoyed a stint in a drying-out clinic. Life threatens to be economical: the work should raise £60.*



Euro stars?

WILL the Ashdowns join that other couple in Brussels who never made it, the Kinnocks? Tony Blair, I hear, has suggested to Paddy that should he want Sir Leon Brittan's job at the Euro Commission, it is his. Although one of the Brussels sinecures normally goes to a Tory, it is not obligatory.

Also uncertain about his future: dear Alan Beith. He has campaigned discreetly to replace Betty Boothroyd as Speaker. After Wednesday's news, he made it clear that "now is not the time" to discuss the succession — code, I feel, for "I'm mad for it".

● *UNLIKELY cronies. Alan Clark tells me he "adores" that gentle soul Alastair Campbell and thinks "he should be PM". Well, he almost is. The admiration is returned. Campbell has been heard to say that he knows what the Tories think as he has "spoken to Al — the only one with a brain".*

Odd couple

SHOULD be fun to see how Lord Wakeham and Gerald Kaufman rub along on the Lords Royal Commission. The two clashed a year ago, when Gerald ventured that John was a "eunuch" while Wakeham said the MP was "an expert at offensive remarks".

JASPER GERARD

'Proud, patriotic, high-minded and diligent — unmistakably British down to his bowler hat and blazer'

Philip Howard

Defining what makes Brits British is the latest trivial pursuit for politicians. An historical criterion for Britishness uses things that we are all supposed to do together, such as bumping on horseback after foxes, despising the French and hating the Pope. We might call this the unification principle. But its flaw is that today at least as many Brits shudder at fox-hunters, admire the French and revere the Pope.

A better criterion for Britishness is the insularity principle. This selects the things that Britons do that nobody else in the world would dream of copying, like cold baths in midwinter, regimental blazers with brass buttons and opening the bedroom window at night, especially when there is a freezing gale. Such as:

1. *Bread pudding. We find this mess of bread, hot milk, and cloves essential for eating with birds. Nobody else in the world agrees with us.*

2. There are many similar national delicacies that define Britishness: Marmite, kippers, plum pudding, fish and chips soaked in vinegar, mushy peas, bloaters, mint sauce with lamb, "Gentleman's relish" and all other such fish pastes, pork scratchings, powdered custard, digestive biscuits half covered in chemical chocolate.

3. Lesser breeds celebrate Christmas with *foie gras* and oysters, Châteaubriand and venison, *and other unseasonal foods. Americans eat their native bird for Thanksgiving, cooked with style and cranberries. Only the British fortify the cottonwool fowl for Christmas with chipolata sausages and Brussels sprouts.*

4. *Only the British guzzle Brussels sprouts. Not even the* Belgians will touch them.

5. It is a cliché that Britons drink beer at warmer than room temperature while standing up. But if we do secure a stool at the bar, it is our custom to spread our elbows and conversation to block anyone else from approaching the bar to give his order. More *authoritarian countries would arrange to serve beer at tables, or at least paint 6ft of the bar red to keep it clear for orders.*

6. *Of course Britons invented team sports and games.* Other nations are better at them today. A surprising number of them play cricket. But we are unrivalled at the stupidity, cheating and venality of our sportsmen, the egos, bungs and incompetence of our sports administrators, and the tribal behaviour of supporters. The only sport that nobody in the world bothers to play other than us is croquet.

7. Pantomime is alien to aliens. It may be descended from the *commedia dell'arte* and echo *the last enchantments of the music hall. But it has declined a long way from them. Foreigners find* pantomime absurd, coarse, distasteful and incomprehensible.

8. Who but the British would pay even a penny for crackers? What sentient being enjoys wearing a paper hat, reading a pathetic motto, blowing a whistle, throwing streamers and receiving a "free gift" of plastic of no ascertainable purpose?

9. Other nations send their naughty children to boarding school and regard teaching as a noble profession. The British send away their richest, most privileged and most socially upwardly mobile little darlings.

10. Only the Brits would dream of wearing bowler hats (mainly in Ulster these days, with rolled umbrella). *Ulsters, scratchy tweed knickerbockers, green (now yellow) wellies, club ties of distasteful colours such as* MCC, and collar pins. These are all intended as marks of tribal distinction. They show that the wearer belongs to something, and, more important, that you are excluded. Englishwomen wear tweed nightdresses to show that bed is for the serious business of snoring on a hot water bottle, not for decadent continental hanky-panky.

11. At his best the Briton can be high-minded, diligent, patriotic, proud, humorous and virtuous. At his worst the Briton can be virtuous, humorous, proud, patriotic, diligent and high-*minded*.

12. It is remarkable that no other nations copy us in these or other insular particularities, such as the peerage and the *horridly unfair custom of primogeniture. But that is their bad luck.* The banal conclusion to the popular quest for Britishness is that our mongrel peoples include every peculiarity under the sun. That foreigners are odd. Shakespeare defined us. "England, hedged in with the main,/ That water-walled bulwark, still secure/ And confident from foreign purposes . . ." There is the Chunnel now. And we have become less xenophobic. Some of us can like foreigners, even if they are not waiters or au pairs. But the defining characteristic of Britishness is still smug, dotty insularity.

THE POTENT TAXPAYER

Viagra sparks a welcome debate on who pays for what

A diamond-shaped blue pill has stimulated a long overdue debate about the National Health Service. By proposing that the anti-impotence drug Viagra should be restricted to men with serious disabilities, the Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, has implicitly accepted what others have long acknowledged: treatments provided by the NHS need to be rationed by means beyond that of the waiting list. A Health Secretary is now openly meddling with doctors' freedom to prescribe according to clinical need. He is limiting patients' universal right to free treatment. For this Mr Dobson deserves praise. Instead of protesting, the medical profession should help Mr Dobson to devise new, fresh ideas about how to fund the NHS and meet public demand.

A worthwhile debate demands candour. As recently as Monday Mr Dobson stated that treatment is given "according to individual need, not a preordained entitlement" — a view to which yesterday's decision runs counter. Doctors should acknowledge that, as there are not limitless resources to fund the NHS, setting priorities is necessary. The question is who should set them, and on what terms? Are contraceptives, or treatments to tackle obesity, to be classed as "lifestyle drugs", despite the public and medical good they may bring? And who is in a position to ordain that a man with six months to live should not be given an expensive new drug that might give him another year of life on the ground of cost alone?

These decisions are already being taken in a confused, chaotic manner and behind closed Whitehall and health authority doors. So-called "postcode prescribing", where a treatment is available under one health authority but not another, appears to be an established practice. In East Norfolk, doctors are allowed to prescribe a drug for motor neurone disease that can prolong sufferers' lives by three to six months. In neighbouring Suffolk, patients have to pay for it themselves. Universality of provision may be a good political catch-phrase but it rings hollow in a growing number of regions.

The emergence of new drugs and the genetics revolution threaten to exacerbate this problem. The Government hopes to pass other difficult decisions to the new National Institute for Clinical Excellence. This body's task is to iron out inconsistencies in health provision by judging whether new drugs should be available on the NHS on the grounds of efficacy, and then provide national clinical guidance. While national guidelines will be welcome, decisions affecting patients will be taken by remote government advisers, not doctors or surgeons. Ministers cannot expect that this new quango will address the fundamental conundrum: however much taxpayers' money is spent on health, the public's expectations will never be met. Rationing cannot be addressed by ministers wondering "how can we provide the best service?". Instead, they should be asking "What is the public prepared to pay for and how?"

Mr Dobson should consider health systems in other countries, where people are required to pay for some or all of their treatment depending on medical need: serious illnesses are treated free, while inessential drugs must be paid for. The Government should encourage individuals to take more responsibility for their own wellbeing by encouraging private medical insurance. In a more transparent system, where people are insured against misfortune, the prospect of paying for prescriptions is less likely to provoke such dismay. So long as the public is shielded from the true costs of treatment, the demands on the NHS will go on soaring, leaving Mr Dobson impotent to respond.

JUST JUDGES

Zimbabwe's courts take liberty's side against torturers

The illegal detention and torture of two Zimbabwean journalists by the military is chilling. The Government of President Mugabe has never been tolerant of dissent. But it seems increasingly ready to use unlawful intimidation against its growing number of critics. Yet the journalists' appalling treatment has also elicited vigorous protest from churches, unions and intellectuals and brought out the best in the country's civil institutions, notably the courts. Mark Chavunduka, the Editor of Zimbabwe's leading independent newspaper, *The Standard*, and Ray Choto, a senior *Standard* reporter, probably owe their lives to the perseverance of their publisher, Clive Wilson, and their lawyer, and to the determination of two brave judges to uphold the law.

The two men still face trial, under a section of the 1960 Law and Order Maintenance Act framed under white rule with the express purpose of suppressing freedom of speech, for causing "alarm and despondency". All charges should now be dropped. The journalists have been subjected to hideous tortures, including electric shocks, burns, beatings and the "submarine" method of water suffocation. The accuracy or otherwise of the *Standard's* news report, by which both stand, that 23 soldiers had been arrested for inciting others to a military coup is a minor matter compared with the flagrant contempt of court shown not only by the military who detained them, but by Moven Mahachi, Zimbabwe's powerful Defence Minister.

Under Zimbabwean law, civilians suspected of an offence can be arrested only by the police, who must grant them access to a lawyer and their family and produce them in court to be charged within 48 hours. Last Thursday, two days after Mr Chavunduka was detained by the military and held incommunicado, Judge George Smith ruled in the High Court that the military had no jurisdiction over him and ordered his release. The Defence Ministry refused, handing him over to police custody only on Monday, after Judge James DeVittie announced that if he was not brought to court, he would order the arrest of Mr Mahachi and his principal aide that night. When Mr Choto then came out of hiding to give himself up to the police, the military seized both men and tortured them continuously for 24 hours in an attempt to force them to divulge their sources.

Mr Choto believed his torturers when they told him that the President had signed his death warrant. What all Zimbabweans believe is that Mr Mahachi, who is close to Mr Mugabe, would not have defied the courts unless he believed that he had the President's approval. Mr Mugabe keeps his Cabinet on a tight rein. Many will also believe that the news report must have had real substance to provoke so extreme a reaction. This has not been confined to *The Standard*; police in the southern town of Masvingo have arrested an officer of the feared Central Intelligence Organisation for beating up journalists in three news organisations. The ill-paid military's discontent, whichis common knowledge, has been sharpened by its heavy casualties in the deeply unpopular Zimbabwean military intervention in Congo's civil war.

President Mugabe's only credible course now is to dismiss his Defence Minister, court-martial the soldiers concerned and drop all charges against *The Standard*. Unless he disowns this disgraceful act, he will be indelibly associated with it, and his *fin de règne* will become more unstable and threatening than it already is.

WORLD WIDE HONOUR

The new and lasting memorial of the Web

When they were buried, their memory was kept alive by the most enduring means known to man — with simple lettering in stone above their graves. Line after line of such headstone is ranged in French and Belgian war cemeteries. Where there was once mud, rubble and blood, there are now some of the world's most poignant resting places, where Commonwealth soldiers who fell in two world wars lie buried. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission promised that "their name liveth for evermore". But time and distance have separated families from the records of their long-fallen loved ones.

The commission has now made imaginative use of a new and unexpected tool for tracing and remembering those who fell, the Internet. Since the Debt of Honour Register was posted on the net just before Armistice Day, more than four million people have visited the site. The Commission has been flooded with follow-up inquiries. In the first ten days alone, some 250,000 people from all over the world sought details of relatives and long-fallen friends. Interest has also been stimulated by the recent wave of books and films about the First World War, the moving interviews with the last members of the generation that fought in the trenches and last November's commemorations of the 80th anniversary of the Armistice.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has deservedly earned praise over the years for the meticulous care with which it tends the graves of 1.78 million soldiers who lie in 3,000 foreign fields in some 150 countries. When it was established, it took the early and controversial decision that in the remembrance of death all are equal. No family was allowed to purchase a larger plot, no Briton to have a better headstone than a subject soldier from the Empire, no officer to be marked out from his men.

The commission's Internet site has properly preserved this spirit. Each entry has the same format, dignity and accompanying history. Each upholds the promise to "defeat the oblivion of time".

History best comes alive when it touches human lives. Family history is often lost in a modern world where neighbourhoods are more likely to change and younger generations less likely to keep in touch. Family Bibles are rarer and parish records less comprehensive. Yet the need to trace our roots is as strong as ever. So, too, is the yearning to unravel the mysteries of how missing relatives died and what happened to the uncles and grandfathers who went to war and never returned. Searches that used to take years are now possible in a trice; questions can be answered and pride in sacrifice rekindled. For this, as for its unstinting work in tending the dead, the commission deserves high praise.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

MEPs' power and will to censure the Commission

From Mr Roy Perry, MEP for Wight and Hampshire South (European People's Party Group (Conservative))

Sir, The analysis by William Rees-Mogg of the role played by Labour MEPs, most especially Pauline Green, in actually saving the present European Commission was particularly sharp (article, January 18; see also letters, January 16). Mrs Green indeed said at the very outset that she tabled a censure motion with the intention to vote against it. No one can be surprised that she ultimately applied the tactic of withdrawing her motion.

However, Mr Blair has another option to show whether he really believes Mme Cresson or Señor Marin have fallen short of the standards expected of them. Under Clause 160 of the Treaty of Rome the Council may apply to the European Court of Justice to compulsorily retire a commissioner. That is a power so far denied to the Parliament.

It is a pity that, unlike the European Parliament which is at least open in its processes, the Council of Ministers is totally closed and we need never know whether Tony Blair or any of the other ministers has the courage to make such a move.

Yours faithfully,
ROY J. PERRY,
Tarrants Farmhouse, West Wellow,
Romsey, Hampshire SO51 6DA.
January 18.

From Mrs Pauline Latham

Sir, I was in Strasbourg for the whole of last week, shadowing the Conservative MEP, Giles Chichester. I witnessed at first hand not only an MEP's way of life but also what happened during the week, culminating in the vote on Thursday on whether to censure the Commission.

National governments did indeed put enormous pressure on their MEPs not to vote for the motion of censure. The Socialist group in the European Parliament, led by British Labour MEP, Pauline Green, withdrew rather than upset their friends.

The resolve of the Conservative MEPs, led by Edward McMillan-Scott, did not waver. They voted for censure because they do not believe that fraud and mismanagement should be condoned.

I'm sure that, if voters think that our Labour MEPs are happy to sweep things under the carpet, they will re-examine their loyalties at the European elections in June and prefer to endorse the decisive, clear line on fraud demonstrated by the Conservative MEPs.

Yours faithfully,
PAULINE LATHAM
(Prospective Conservative European Parliamentary Candidate for the East Midlands),
Hierons Wood, Vicarage Lane,
Little Eaton, Derby DE21 5EA.
January 18.

From Mr Peter R. Wiles

Sir, The European Parliament had an opportunity to widen its powers and control over the Commission last week, and flunked it.

The Government is busy ensuring that we voters won't have the opportunity to vote for MEPs who may take a more robust line in future. Our best riposte is to let the next lot be elected on a turnout of under 10 per cent. Members of political parties might want to drag themselves to the polling booths to vote for their party's list, but I can't for the life of me see why anyone else should bother.

Yours faithfully,
PETER R. WILES,
33 Pinewoods, Church Aston,
Newport, Shropshire TF10 9LN.
peter.wiles@iclweb.com

From Mr Alf Lomas, MEP for London North East (Party of European Socialists Group (Labour))

Sir, I agree largely with the article by William Rees-Mogg but, when he criticised Labour MEPs for voting against the motion of censure on the Commission, he might have mentioned that there were five who did not obey the whip.

Three Labour MEPs, including myself, voted for the motion of censure and two others abstained. Not many, I concede, but there are still a few free spirits left.

Yours sincerely,
ALF LOMAS,
Ground Floor, Queensway House,
275/285 High Street,
Stratford, E15 2TF.
January 19.

From Mr Norman Shelmerdine

Sir, The British Government should immediately stop all financial payments to the Commission until such time as adequate controls are in force.

The problem would soon be resolved, especially if other similar-minded countries follow our lead.

Yours faithfully,
N. A. SHELMERDINE,
Bracken, St Catherines,
Hook Heath, Woking,
Surrey GU22 0HW.
January 18.

Voluntary code to check on nannies

From the Editor of The Professional Nanny

Sir, Before their experiences with a bulimic Australian (article, "Why parents must be wary", January 19), Joe Joseph's family had employed a "string of wonderfully reliable" nannies and this one's immediate predecessor had been "brilliant". However, it was the problems of this one nanny that merited publicity — good nannies are simply not newsworthy.

The Government's newly announced voluntary code will only go some way towards boosting nannies' status. A Kitemark will be awarded to agencies which guarantee to interview nannies face-to-face and check their CVs and references — formalising a procedure many agencies already insist on and good nannies are more than happy to submit to.

The fact remains that many parents still either do not use agencies or employ inappropriate forms of childcare, such as an au pair or mother's help, to do a nanny's job. When something goes wrong the press is once again full of "nanny from hell" stories.

This does not, of course, diminish the sheer awfulness of the Sullivan case, nor of any other case where a child is damaged by her carer. Most nannies, however, see themselves as professionals and despair of the way in which their profession is portrayed in the media.

Yours faithfully,
JUDITH CALVER,
Editor, *The Professional Nanny*,
Admiral House,
66-68 East Smithfield, E1 9XY.
judith.calver@zetnet.co.uk
January 19.

Pinochet supporters

From Señor Sebastián Aliaina and others

Sir, We write on behalf of 34 pro-Pinochet demonstrators (report, January 19). We have been standing outside the British Houses of Parliament in order to make it clear to the British law lords and the British authorities that many Chileans want General Pinochet freed, so that the reconciliation process in Chile can continue undamaged.

We are not being paid to participate in this demonstration of support. We were able to achieve low-price air fares and accommodation by travelling as a group and these arrangements were negotiated by pro-Pinochet groups in Chile.

The money we are spending is a lot more worthwhile than the British taxpayers' money that is being wasted supporting the Spanish Government's attempt to extradite the man who brought back democracy to Chile.

Yours faithfully,
SEBASTIAN ALIAINA,
JUAN ARIZTIA,
RAUL MANES CATALON,
FRESIA GONZALEZ,
SOL LETELIER,
TECO RUIZ,
c/o PO Box 15, London SW6 3TU.
January 21.

Rising through the Army ranks

From Major-General John Stokoe, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Land Command

Sir, Mr John Douce's letter (January 12; see also letters, January 18) has prompted me to contribute to the ill-informed debate begun by Major Eric Joyce, in which the latter alleges that the Army is officered by a senior social "elite". This is not the Army I recognise and is not the one in which I serve.

I find little of real substance in Major Joyce's sterile and outdated thesis. I attended a state grammar school before joining the Army as a 15-year-old apprentice in 1963. After three years I graduated to the Regular Army as a Lance Corporal, achieving a place at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst a year later and a subsequent commission. Thirty years on, and 51 years old, I am a Major-General — a position gained on merit pursuing a career I have enjoyed to the full. There are many ex-boy soldiers leading equally fulfilling careers as commissioned officers.

I relate this to demonstrate that the Army is a true meritocracy where men and women succeed entirely on ability.

I am shortly to join the board of the new Army Foundation College at Harrogate, where I served my apprenticeship when it was an apprentice college. I can think of no more satisfying a task than to be involved in a college which is training high-quality young men and women from many diverse backgrounds, knowing, through personal experience, that amongst them will be some of our future senior officers.

Yours etc,
JOHN STOKOE,
Erskine Barracks,
Wilton, Salisbury SP2 0AG.
January 18.

From Lance Corporal P. Sichel (retd)

Sir, Colonel Charles Wilson (retd) states that "nothing stands in the way of every man in the Army reaching his ceiling". Very probably true, but who determines the altitude of the ceiling? Probably the very same people who have always done so.

Yours faithfully,
PETER SICHEL,
130 Watling Street, Wellington,
Telford, Shropshire TF1 2NH.
sichel@globalnet.co.uk
January 18.

Du Pré film

From Mr John Burgess

Sir, There needs to be no special pleading by Julian Lloyd Webber and his co-signatories on behalf of the late Jacqueline du Pré (letter, January 20: features, January 21). Her contribution to music is quite unsullied and fortunately available for all to hear; her sex life and character, although possibly colourful and flawed respectively, are not relevant to her musicianship or lifetime achievement.

However, musicians, particularly those with a high public profile, run the same risks as politicians in conducting their private lives. They should beware of the risks they run and either moderate their behaviour, or take the appropriate precautions to ensure continuing confidentiality.

I remain, Sir,
yours faithfully,
JOHN BURGESS,
65 Ham Close, Holt,
Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 4PY.
jburgess@jblight.force9.co.uk
January 20.

From the Chief Executive of Film Four Ltd

Sir, Julian Lloyd Webber and others object in their letter today to the portrayal of Jacqueline du Pré in the film *Hilary and Jackie*. This organisation co-financed the film, and our records indicate that four of the six signatories have not actually seen it.

I would suggest that people make their own minds up as to the quality, success and, in particular, tone of the film rather than be swayed by the prejudices of others.

Yours etc,
PAUL WEBSTER,
Chief Executive, Film Four Ltd,
124 Horseferry Road, SW1P 2TX.
January 20.

'Shaming' of doctor

From Dr Robert M. H. Lefever

Sir, I am no defender of doctors. Next week I am giving evidence to the General Medical Council in the case of a doctor against whom I myself have brought a complaint for malpractice.

However, I am concerned by the case of Dr William Cuthbert (report, January 20) who was "named and shamed" by the Commons Public Administration Select Committee. He has already expressed deep remorse for his error of clinical judgment in this particular case and has apologised several times. What more do they want? The end of his career?

Sincerely,
ROBERT LEFEVER,
2a Pelham Street, SW7 3HU.
January 20.

Lessons on longevity

From Professor R. A. Weale

Sir, Neither your excellent two-page feature, "Time to stop the tyranny of ageism", nor your amusing leading article, "Ever young" (both January 11), so much as hints at the fact that one of the most ageist institutions at the present time is the NHS.

Medical records show the patient's name followed by his/her date of birth. One may well ask what this piece of information is intended to convey. As a device for facilitating a diagnosis it must be suspect, and as one for inducing stereotypical thinking it should be deprecated.

Chronological and biological ages rarely coincide, and patients would be better served by judgments based on the latter, even if this means a greater demand on the medical thought processes or even a change in clinical training. The worship of the calendar extends to relatively trivial fields.

Professor Tom Kirkwood expresses some concern about his eyesight. Your photograph suggests that he is short-sighted; even so, in a few years he may need reading glasses, and it is very probable that they will not be prescribed on the basis of his visual need but on his chronological age.

The key to this is a set of tables based on outmoded and heavily criticised data obtained by an American eye specialist during the first quarter of this century. When Professor Kirkwood starts needing reading glasses, and is asked his age, his reply should be that he has forgotten.

Yours very truly,
R. A. WEALE,
King's College London,
Cornwall House,
Waterloo Road, SE1 8WA.
January 12.

After Ashdown

From Mr Rhodri Morgan, MP for Cardiff West (Labour)

Sir, Following the departure of Paddy Ashdown as its leader (reports and leading article, January 21), can we expect that the Liberal Democrat Party under his successor will change its policy of "constructive opposition" to the Government to one of destructive co-operation?

Yours,
RHODRI MORGAN,
House of Commons.
January 21.

Africa's legacy

From Mr Alan Forward

Sir, Your leading article (January 8) says "Britain could have ruled Africa better and left it better", and the High Commissioner of Kenya (letter, January 18) accuses those who colonised Africa of "eliminating native populations and the outright suppression of basic human rights". In fact, British governments over many years were engaged in preparing African countries for independence; what other Empire has adopted such a policy?

You also rightly draw attention to Africans' courageous opposition today "in the judiciary and the Churches, parts of the hounded press and many a village" to misrule. Is such opposition not part of Britain's legacy?

Christianity, justice, democracy, education, journalism and advances in medicine, as well as political and economic development, were all part of the legacy. In Uganda, for example, we ruled for only 68 years from the declaration of the protectorate in 1894 to independence in 1962. Now, 37 years later, it might be concluded that we could have left Uganda better if we had left it later.

Many Ugandans, and Kenyans too, may well agree that some three or four more years of internal self-government might have set their countries on a steadier course after independence.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN FORWARD
(Private Secretary to the Governor of Uganda, 1962),
The Lindens,
Poyntington, Dorset DT9 4LF.
January 18.

From Mr O. S. Knowles

Sir, Your leading article contained much that needed saying.

Laurens van der Post — who as an Afrikaner had no particular reason to love the British — described the British Empire as the nearest to a Platonic system of government that the world has ever seen. This verdict was largely earned by a small body of men who maintained a remarkably high standard of integrity and led from the front.

The Northern Province of Kenya, for instance, is today the scene of much banditry, murders and cattle-raiding; yet for the 30 or 40 years preceding the country's independence the province was controlled by no more than 20 administrators and a few police officers, who spent much of their time on safari showing the flag and stamping out small outbreaks of lawlessness before they spread.

There are no quick or easy solutions to the problems of African government. If the opposition is potentially corrupt, democracy will not help, though a free press will. The only solution is to teach the principles of good government in schools, universities, churches, and on the job.

It is little use for Western governments to try to beat African countries into shape with sticks. Aid should be focused on teaching good government — together with family planning, to ensure that the rate of population growth does not exceed the rate of economic growth.

Yours etc,
O. S. KNOWLES
(Acting Permanent Secretary, Kenya Ministry of Finance, 1967),
11 Cuxham Road,
Watlington, Oxfordshire OX9 5JW.

Chambers wit

From Ms Helen Grayson

Sir, My favourite entry in *Chambers* (letters, January 12, 18, and 19) is the one for Japanese cedar: "A very tall Japanese conifer (*Cryptomeria japonica*) often dwarfed by Japanese gardeners."

Yours faithfully,
HELEN GRAYSON,
39 St James Terrace,
Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5QT.
pcaulfield@cix.compulink.co.uk

From Mr Adam Ogilvie-Smith

Sir, My edition of *Chambers Dictionary* notes that a picture restorer is someone who "cleans and restores and sometimes ruins old pictures".

Yours faithfully,
ADAM OGILVIE-SMITH,
Hyde House, Longworth,
Oxfordshire OX13 5HH.
January 21.

Business letters, page 29

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
January 21: The Prince Edward, President, The Children's Film Unit, this afternoon attended a Lunch at Saatchi and Saatchi Cause Connection, 80 Charlotte Street, London W1.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
January 21: The Princess Royal, Colonel, The Blues and Royals, this morning visited Hyde Park Barracks, Knightsbridge, London SW1.

Her Royal Highness, President of Patrons, Crime Concern, today attended the Pru Youth Action Luncheon, Prudential, 142 Holborn Bars, London EC1.

KENSINGTON PALACE
January 21: The Duke of Gloucester this afternoon visited AJEX Housing Association at AJEX House, Stamford Hill, London N16.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal will visit Philip Carr Marketing, Long Rock, Penzance, Cornwall, at 10.00; will visit the Humphry Davy School, Coombe Road, Penzance, at 10.45 and will open new buildings; will open St Julia's Hospice at St Michael's Hospital, Trelissick Road, Hayle, at noon; will open the Centre for Foundation Studies at Cornwall College, Pool, Redruth, at 1.15; and will visit Classic Cottages, Leslie House, Lady Street, Helston, at 2.50.

The Duke of Kent, as president, Royal Institution of Great Britain, will attend the evening discourse by Professor Susan Greenfield at 21 Albemarle Street, London W1, at 8.00.

Robert Armitage

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Robert Armitage will be held at Christ Church, Chelsea, on Thursday, January 28, 1999, at noon.

Birthdays today

Viscount Bearstead, 49; Miss Mary Hayley Bell (Lady (John) Mills), playwright, 88; Mr Nigel Benn, boxer, 35; Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson, 74; Lord Cottesloe, 72; Sir John Cotton, former diplomat, 90; Sir Charles Davis, former Counsel to the Speaker, 90; Sir Simon Day, farmer, 64; Mr George Foreman, boxer, 51; Judge Ann Goddard, QC, 63; Miss Margaret Hall, head of design, British Museum, 63; Professor Cyril Hogarth, physicist, 75; Lord Hughes, 88; Mr John Hurt, actor, 59; Mr John Last, arts patron, 59; Baroness Lockwood, 75; Mr Richard Osmond, former company secretary, Post Office, 52; Sir Alfred Ramsey, former manager, England's World Cup football team, 79; Mrs Claire Rayner, writer and broadcaster, 68; Mrs Gillian Shephard, MP, 59; Sir Michael Spicer, MP, 56; Mr William Spray, former Headmaster, Leighton Park School, 78; Sir Hilary Talbot, former High Court judge, 87; Lord Wardington, 75; Sir Graham Wilkins, former chairman, Thorn EMI, 75.

Dinners

Institute of Physics
Sir Gareth Roberts, FRS, President of the Institute of Physics, presided at the annual awards dinner held last night at the Savoy Hotel. Mr David Potter, Chairman of Psion, was the principal guest and speaker. Afterwards the president presented the institute's medals and prizes for 1998 to:

Professor G.E. Bacon, CPhys, FInstP; Dr J. Forshaw, CPhys, MInstP; Professor J.E. Harries, FRoyMetSoc, CPhys, FInstP; Dr T.G. Harvey, CPhys, MInstP; Professor P.L. Knight, CPhys, FInstP; Professor C.H. Llewellyn Smith, CPhys, FInstP, FRS; Ms A Macdonald, CPhys, FInstP; Professor I.C. Percival, FRS; Dr J A Scott, CPhys, FInstP; Mr R. Watton.

Honorary Fellowships were bestowed upon Professor A.J. Leggett, FRS, and Sir Roger Penrose, FRS. Among others present were:

Lord Flowers, FRS, and Lady Flowers, Lord and Lady McCarthy, Sir David Davies, FRS, and Lady Davies, Sir Roger Elliott, FRS, Sir Aaron Klug, OM, FRS, and Lady Klug, Sir John and Lady Mason, Sir Michael and Lady Moore, Lady Penrose, Sir Brian Pippard, FRS, Sir Richard Sykes, FRS, and Lady Sykes, Sir Denys Wilkinson, FRS, and Lady Wilkinson.

The Master of the Company of Scientific Instrument Makers, the President of the Société Française de Physique, the President of Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft, the Chief Executive of EPSRC, the President of the Institution of Chemical Engineers, the President of the Institute of Acoustics, the President of the Geological Society, the First Counsellor at the German Embassy, the President of the Institute of Materials, the Executive Secretary of CSTI, the Director of the Royal Institution, the Chief Executive of PPARC, the President and the Secretary General of the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Chairman of Save British Science, the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, the President of the Institute of Physics & Engineering in Medicine, the President of the Institute of Measurement and Control and the President of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Securities Institute
Mr Graham Ross Russell, Chairman of the Securities Institute, presided at a dinner of the institute held last night at the Charterhouse in honour of Mr Tim Nicholson, a former chief executive.

Chambers of Andrew Thompson & David Guy
The Chambers of Andrew Thompson & David Guy held a Dinner in the Middle Temple on January 15 to mark the 90th Birthday of His Honour Thomas Dewar (January 5) whose health was proposed by Alan Tyrell, QC. His Honour responded and other members of chambers spoke.

Appointments

Sir Edward Heath, KG, MP, and Mr Richard Baker are to be Patrons of the St Albans International Organ Festival.

Green Howards ask American rebels for their silver back

By Paul Wilkinson

ONE of the British Army's oldest infantry units is seeking the return of lost regimental silverware, looted by American separatists during the War of Independence more than 200 years ago.

The Green Howards believe that part of the collection might still survive on show in the homes of descendants of the colonists who rebelled against King George III.

The regimental museum at its base in Richmond, North Yorkshire, contains nothing which predates the Revolutionary War, even though the unit was formed in 1688. It has now enlisted the help of an American lawyer to trace the missing silverware.

Roger Chapman, a retired major who is the museum's development officer, said: "It would be nice if it could be traced and returned, but realistically this is just a research project to find out if it still exists and where it is."

The plate, vases and trophies, along with a payroll of 800 silver dollars and chests containing the personal valuables of the officers, was in the regiment's baggage train as it forced its way through inhospitable marshlands in South Carolina. Known then as the 19th Regiment of Foot, it had only recently arrived in America as part of a force sent to relieve the garrison at Fort Star, north of the state capital, Charleston.

The regiment had won a victory over rebels at Monck's Corner, but on July 16, 1781, as it returned to Charleston, it was ambushed by American patriots under the command of General Thomas Sumter, a local hero after whom Fort Sumter was later named. He was famous for his leadership against the British and known as "The Carolina Gamecock".

After the battle some of the officers' personal possessions were returned, but the cash and the regimental silver were never seen again. Major Chapman said: "We have very little information about the event, how it was seized, what exactly was taken. The problem is that the ship carrying the dispatches from the time was attacked on its journey back across the Atlantic and the information was thrown overboard to stop it falling into the Americans' hands."

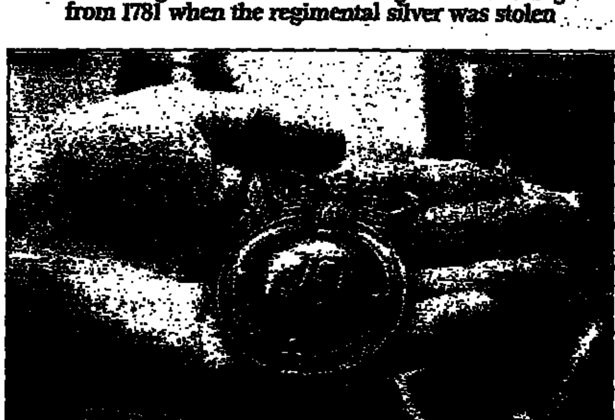
Now Major Chapman has asked Dr Robert Black, a personal friend and Carolina lawyer who has lectured at the Charleston military academy, to investigate.

Dr Black said: "Everyone in South Carolina is very proud of any 18th-century links they may have. They proudly display old documents and pictures on the 'Heritage Wall' in their homes. I know quite a few families which have ancestors who fought in the campaigns that the Green Howards took part in, and it's quite possible they will know something about the incident when the baggage train was ambushed. Who knows, they may even have some of the silver in their bank vaults."

The Green Howards are one of the few remaining units of the British Army which have never been amalgated with another regiment.

The present title was adopted in 1921, although it originated in the 1740s as a nickname, when units took their names from their commanding officer. They were dubbed Howard's Greens after the green facings of their scarlet uniform tunic, to differentiate them from the 3rd Foot which also had a colonel called Howard. As the 3rd's facings were buff they became Howard's Buffs, later immortalised in the phrase "Steady the Buffs".


An etching of a Green Howards grenadier dating from 1781 when the regimental silver was stolen


A reproduction ammunition pouch crest from 1781

Admiral Arthur Phillip

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, accompanied by Mr Sheriff and Mrs Brian Harris, attended the annual Admiral Arthur Phillip commemoration service held yesterday at St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside. Admiral Sir Peter Gadsden, Chairman of the Britain-Australia Bicentennial Trust and President of the Australia and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (UK), read the lesson. Mr David Wickham, Archivist of the Clothworkers' Company, gave an address. The Deputy High Commissioner for Australia was among those present. A luncheon was held afterwards at Grocers' Hall.

Meeting

Plumbers' Company
Mr Edward Hopkinson, Master of the Plumbers' Company, presented the Lilli Sara Barber Memorial Gold Medal for 1998 to plumbing student Mr Peter Johnston of Carlisle College at a meeting held yesterday at Ironmongers' Hall. The Master also presented the Armed Services Award to the best student qualifying in plumbing, as recommended by the Commandant of the Royal School of Military Engineering, Chatham, to Lance Corporal T. Purnasingh. Both winners also received the Honorary Freedom of the Company.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Francis Bacon, Viscount St Albans, Lord Chancellor 1618-21, London, 1561; André Marie Ampère, physicist, Lyons, 1775; George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron Byron, poet, London, 1788; August Strindberg, dramatist, Stockholm, 1849; D.W. Griffith, film director, Floydsfork, Kentucky, 1875; U Thant, Secretary-General of the UN 1961-71, Pantanaw, Burma, 1909.

DEATHS: William Paterson, financier and founder of the Bank of England, London, 1719; Charles Kean, actor-manager, London, 1868; Sir Joseph Whitworth, industrialist and engineer, Monte Carlo, 1887; Carlo Pellegrini, the cartoonist (Ape), London, 1889; Sir Isaac Pitman, inventor of a shorthand system, Bath, 1897; Walter Sickert, painter, Bath, 1942; Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th American President 1963-69, San Antonio, Texas, 1973.

The Accession of Edward VII, 1901.

The UK, Irish Republic and Denmark joined the Common Market, 1972.

English-Speaking Union

Lady Boyd was the speaker at an English-Speaking Union literary evening held last night at Dartmouth House. Baroness Brigstocke, chairman, presided.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr N.S. Archer and Miss E.M. Power
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Mr and Mrs Stewart Archer, of Lymington, Hampshire, and Erica, younger daughter of Mr Michael Power, of Cadley, Wiltshire, and Mrs Margaret Lucas, of Cattistock, Dorset.

Mr J.G.G. Beaumont and Miss J.S. Baines
The engagement is announced between Justin, elder son of the Hon M.H. Beaumont, of Northumberland, and Mrs A.F. Maitland, of London, and Jacqueline, daughter of Mr and Mrs S. Baines, of North Yorkshire.

Mr C.O. Bridgeman and Miss C.I.A. Moynahan
The engagement is announced between Constantine, youngest son of the late Mr and Mrs Dick Bridgeman, of Castlenau, and Katie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Moynahan, of London.

Mr M.M. Byrne and Miss E.C.L. Anderson
The engagement is announced between Mark, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Byrne, of Wimbledon, London, and Claire, daughter of Mr Kenneth Anderson and the late Mrs Cicely Anderson, of Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire.

Mr D.J. Evans and Miss D.F. O'Herlihy
The engagement is announced between David, son of Dr and Mrs David Evans, of Elgin, and Deirdre, daughter of Mr and Mrs David O'Herlihy, of Cork.

Captain J.V. Goodwin and Miss R.O. Waters
The engagement is announced between Captain James Goodwin, The Royal Tank Regiment, son of Major and Mrs Michael Goodwin, of Wool, Dorset, and Rischenda, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Waters, of Perth, Western Australia.

Mr H.R. Green and Miss K.A. Short
The engagement is announced between Hadley, son of Mr Roger Green, of Brancaster, and Mrs Anita Green, of Weston Colville, and Kim, youngest daughter of Professor R.V. Short, of Melbourne, Australia, and Dr Mary Short, of Cambridge.

Mr R.C.A. Hankey and Miss M.J. Muszynski
The engagement is announced between Rupert, only son of the Hon and Mrs Christopher Alers Hankey, of Westerham, Kent, and Maria, eldest daughter of the late Mr Stanislas Muszynski and of Mrs Muszynski, of Billericay, Essex.

Mr A.J. Hurst and Miss M.S. Monday
The engagement is announced between Adam, eldest son of Professor and Mrs Roger Hurst, of Bergen, The Netherlands, and Michele, elder daughter of Mr John Monday, of Moreton, and Mrs Sylvia Vernon, of Wallasey, the Wirral.

Lieutenant R.P.H. Hutchings, RN, and Miss S.C. Hardcastle
The engagement is announced between Richard, younger son of Mr Hugh Pilkington-Cushion, of New Malden, Surrey, and of Mrs Judy Hutchings, of East Mersea, Essex, and Sophie, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Hardcastle, of Dunsfold, Surrey.

Dr D.N. Jazanovich and Miss S.D. Goulden
The engagement is announced between Diego, son of Silvio Jazanovich and the late Ana Silvia Fraimorice, of Madrid, Spain, and Sara, daughter of Alan and Marion Goulden.

Mr C.J. Kenny and Miss C.M.E. Davies
The engagement is announced between Christopher, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Kevin Kenny, of Wimbledon, and Dublin, and Catherine, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Antony Davies, of Barnes, London.

Mr D.R. Long and Miss C.M. Fennemore
The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr Roger Long and the late Mrs Long, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, and Camilla, daughter of Mr and Mrs Rodney Fennemore, of Kensington, London.

Mr T.A. Myine and Miss N.M. Hill
The engagement is announced between Thomas, son of the late Mr Robert Myine and of Mrs Myine, of Ropley, Hampshire, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Hill, of Christchurch, New Zealand.

Mr M.J. Robinson and Miss F.E. O'Callaghan
The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of Mr and Mrs Michael Robinson, of Mitcham, Surrey, and Frances, daughter of Dr Timothy O'Callaghan and the late Mrs O'Callaghan, of Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees.

Mr J.A. Stallard and Miss K.A-M. Carré
The engagement is announced between James Armstrong, son of Mr Colin Stallard, of Grouville, Jersey, and Mrs Jennifer Stallard, of St Peter Port, Guernsey, and Kelly Anne-Marie, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Carré, of Catel, Guernsey.

Mr J.M.N. Vaughan and Miss P.P. Smith
The engagement is announced between Jason, son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Vaughan, of June Farm, Reigate, and Philippa, daughter of John Smith and Jean McRobie, of London.

Mr G.A.V. Wankling and Miss J.R. Bodger
The engagement is announced between Gerard, son of Mr and Mrs Victor Wankling, of St Helier, Jersey, and Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs William Bodger, of Winchmore Hill, London.

Marriage

Mr R. Miles and Miss L. Macdonald
The marriage took place on Friday, January 15, at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, of Robert, son of Mr and Mrs David Miles, to Lisabel, daughter of Mr and Mrs Macdonald of Tote. Father Anthony Meredith, SJ, and Father Jock Dalrymple officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Tamara Bell, Honor Gilbertson, Mairi Hilleary, Rufus Gibbs, Louis Chancellor, Jack Emlyn-Jones, Max Pitman, Alexander and Max Macdonald. Mr Patrick Gibbs was best man.

A reception was held at the Great Hall, Lincoln's Inn, and the honeymoon is being spent abroad.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

A thief's partner is his own worst enemy. He will be punished if he tells the truth in court, and God will curse him if he doesn't. Proverbs 29.24 (GNB).

BIRTHS

AXTELL - On January 7th 1999 to Karen (née Brown) and Richard, a son, Willoughby Jasper Geoffrey.

BEECH - On January 7th 1999, to Sonia (née Wieruki) and Andrew, of Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire, a daughter, Tara Rebecca Charlotte.

BLÜMMERS - On 19th January 1999 to Jane (née Isbister) and Gerhard, a son, Charles Francis Campbell, a brother for Sebastian.

BROOKS - On 21st January at St Thomas' Hospital, a daughter, Molly Anne, to Gillian and Jonathan.

CAUTLEY - On January 19th in Brussels to Michelle (née Liddiard) and Charles, a son, James Proby.

de PUTRON - On 27th December 1998, to Hayley (née Salmon) and Peter, a lovely daughter, Amelia Carolynne Mary.

ERICKSON - On January 16th at The Portland Hospital to Jessica and Paul, a son Sean Thomas, a brother for Connor and Megan.

FERARD - On December 12th 1998 to Jo (née Benson) and Rupert, a son, Maximilian Charles.

FORBES-NIXON - On January 19th, 1999, to Clare (née Baker) and David, a son, Harry Peter, a brother for George.

GLEESON - On January 10th at The Portland Hospital to Maria-Pia and Michael, a daughter, Octavia Maria Gruszenska.

KELLY/BENNETT-JENKINS - On 26th December 1998 to Sallie and Brendan, twin sons, James Alfred Bennett and Connor Edward Bennett, brothers for Tom, Will and Isobel.

MACDONALD - On January 18th to Juliet and Charles, a son, Geordie Charles.

PERCY-GRIFFITHS - On 17th January 1999, to Sharon (née Colville) and David, a daughter, Freya Celeste, a sister for Jacob.

SHERGILL-SINGH - On December 21st 1998 in London, Ontario, Canada, to Sarb and Teji, a beautiful daughter, Meghan Hannah.

BIRTHS

SOMERSET - On 21st January 1999, to Jane (née Gordon) and Henry, a son, George Henry Fitzroy, a brother for Alice and Claire.

THORNHILL - On January 18th at 18.18 to Susie (née Paget) and Simon, a son, Thomas, brother for Catherine and Fiona.

von RODEN - On January 20th 1999 at the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth to Amanda and Jörg, a wonderful son, Maximilian Wilson.

DEATHS

ALLMAND-SMITH - On January 10th 1999 peacefully in hospital Leonard Henry Allmand-Smith in his 89th year, formerly of Over Stratton, Somerset and Pythouse, Wiltshire. The dearly loved husband of the late Emily Kathleen Allmand-Smith, much loved father of Peter, Wendy and Timothy and devoted Grandpa to his nine grandchildren. Private Burial Service has taken place. Memorial Service on Tuesday April 13th 1999 at Great Warford Chapel, Merrimans Lane at 1pm. All enquiries to Albert R Slack (Funeral Director) Ltd, 84 South Oak Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 6AT. Tel Wilmslow (01625) 525063.

BERGER - Pauline Edythe (née Clemes), peacefully on January 20th 1999 in her 70th year. Beloved mother of Julian and Jonathan, friend to Anne-Marie and Anna and grandmother of Max and Cosima. Always looking brightly to the future, her incredible and ever questioning mind, her kindness, thoughtfulness, radiance and elegance will be sadly missed and fondly remembered. Funeral at 1.00pm on Friday January 22nd at West London Crematorium at Kensal Green, Harrow Road. No flowers. Donations please to Macmillan Nurses, Macmillan Cancer Relief. Enquiries: 0181 740 8794.

BLACK - On Monday, January 11th, 1999, Graeme, formerly of Tullybreck, Thornton, Fife, the Bengal Sappers & Miners and of Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire. The funeral took place quietly on Wednesday, January 20th.

DEATHS

BURKE-SCOTT - James Patrick (Pat) of Romsey and Highgate, on 13th January 1999, aged 85. Much loved husband of Nora, father of Felicity and grandfather of Robert and Paul. Funeral has taken place. Donations, if desired, to RNLI c/o R H Chester, Funeral Directors, 122 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8BY.

CARBONI - Mario Antonio, Bromley, Kent, peacefully at home on January 19th, aged 75. Much loved husband of Valerie and father to Marius and James. Funeral will be at St John's, Park Road, Bromley at 2.45pm on Friday January 29th followed by private service at Beckenham Crematorium. All welcome to church service and afterwards at Bromley Court Hotel, off London Road. No flowers, but donations to the British Heart Foundation.

COLE - Walter Vivian MBE "Wally". Master potter and sculptor of Rye, Sussex. Aged 85. Much loved husband of Eileen, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Peacefully in St. Leonards on 19th January. Funeral 28th January, 2.30 pm, Hastings Crematorium. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to The Artists Benevolent Fund or Rye Healthcare (Rye Hospital) c/o Ellis Bros (Funeral Services), 3 Ferry Road, Rye, East Sussex.

DIXON - Harold of Isleworth. Beloved husband of the late Evelyn Mary Dixon passed away peacefully at West Middlesex Hospital on 9th January 1999 aged 80 years. Funeral Service will take place on Friday 29th January at Hounslow Cemetery Chapel at 11.30am followed by interment at the Borough Cemetery at 12.00. Flowers or donations for the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew Foundations to to be sent to T. H. Sanders Funeral Directors, 28-30 Kew Road, Richmond. TW9 2NA.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

du PONT - In loving memory of Olivier Edmond Jacques Antoine du Pont. April 29th 1970 to January 10th 1999. Died while on a trip to France. Much loved son of Rex and Nicole. Grandson, uncle, godfather and exquisite friend. Bon Viveur, savant and wit of the best vintage. Master of his financial craft, genius at the computer, he will be dearly missed: A man who "acted justly, loved tenderly and walked humbly with his God" Micah 5. Requiem mass at the church of St Mary Assumption at 23 Kensington Square at 11.00am on Sunday, 24th January 1999. No flowers. All donations to Brown International Fund.

FLUTE - Professor Peter, TD, MD, MRC Path on Tuesday 19th January 1999, very suddenly at home, aged 70. Darling husband and best friend of Ann, wonderful father to Debbie, Simon, Jane and Edward, and to his in-law children Nick, David and Rebecca. Splendid Pumpa / Poppa to Luke, Sally, Huw, Amy and Joseph. We shall miss our "Rock", so much loved and respected. Professor of Haematology at St George's Hospital, 1972-1985, S.W. Thames Regional Medical Post-Graduate Dean 1985-1993. Funeral at St Swithun's Church, East Grinstead, Monday 25th January at 2.30pm. Family flowers only but donations to the Haemophilia Society at St George's Hospital c/o Dr John Parker-Williams would be deeply appreciated. Memorial Service to be arranged later.

GREATOREX - Clemency Dorothea Anne MBE, of Goudhurst, Kent, on 17th January peacefully following a short illness, aged 83. Daughter of the late Admiral and Mrs Clement Greatorex. Served the WRVS with distinction for many years. Cremation at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium on Wednesday 3rd February at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations may be sent to The National Asthma Campaign c/o E. R. Hickmott & Son, 41, Grove Hill Road, Tunbridge Wells TN1 1SD. A service of celebration for her life will be held at St Mary's Church, Goudhurst, after Easter.

HIGHAM - Squadron Leader Ernest Donald McLean AFC RAF (Ret'd) on 18th January 1999 after a long illness. Funeral Service at Chichester Crematorium on Tuesday 26th January at 12.30pm. Family flowers only. Donations to the Alzheimers Disease Society, c/o Reynolds Funeral Directors, 31 High Street, Bognor Regis, PO21 1RR.

HORNE - On 19th January 1999 Elsie Ada died peacefully aged 100 at The Briary Nursing Home, Fleet. Beloved wife of the late Captain Leslie ("Trader") Horne R.A.S.C. and founder of The F.E.P.O.W. Wives Group. she is mourned by her sister Winnie and by 11 Eyles and Schofield nephews and neices and their families. Funeral at Aldershot Crematorium on Monday 1st February at 2.00 pm. Family flowers only. donations in her memory to R.N.I.D., 19-23 Featherstone Street, London, EC1Y 8SL.

HUMPHRIS - Bill, peacefully in her sleep on January 20th, aged 82. Daughter of the late Mimi, widow of Jim, breeder of Patrician cats. Loved by Pat, Kenneth, Claudia, Laura and all who knew her.

JEANTY - Paul Robert of La Zagaleta, Marbella, Spain on 20th January 1999, aged 73, in San Francisco following a skiing holiday in Sun Valley. Husband of the late Claire and dearly loved brother of Roger. A respected merchant banker and a founder member of Valderrama Golf Club, he will be much missed by his many friends.

KOSTAN - Paul, Bookseller and Revolutionary, peacefully on 18th January in his 90th year. New York and South African papers please copy.

MATTINGLEY - Catherine. Beloved wife of Matt. Died peacefully at King Edward VII Hospital on January 20th. Service at Rogate, 11.15am, Friday January 29th. Family flowers only. Donations to the Donkey Sanctuary c/o L.F. Linton and Son, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex GU29 9DG.

MEADE-KING - Maurice George of Clifton, Bristol on 16th January. Much loved husband of Lavender, father of Caroline, Simon and Sarah and grandfather of Simon, Sophie, Edward and Peter. Service at Canford Crematorium on 28th January at 11.30am. No flowers but donations if desired to B.R.A.C.E., Research into Alzheimer's. Undertaker: Heaven on Earth, Kingsley House, Cotham Road South, Bristol BS6 5TZ.

PRITCHARD - Hugh Wentworth, C.B.E., on 20th January, peacefully in his sleep, at Woodcote Grove House, aged 95, retired Parliamentary Agent and Solicitor, Reader in the Diocese of Southwark for 62 years. Much loved father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather. Family cremation service, Wednesday, January 27th, at Croydon Crematorium. Service of Thanksgiving for his life, work and Christian witness on Saturday, February 20th, at 2.30pm at St Marks Church, Woodcote, Church Road, Purley.

ROGERS - On January 19th Iris Monica, beloved wife of the late Hugh. Much loved Mother, Grandmother and Great-grandmother. Funeral Service at Haycombe Crematorium, Bath on Friday January 29th at 3pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Children's Hospice South West may be sent to Jollys Funeral Directors, 7 Windsor Place, Bath BA1 3DF.

SPELMAN - Rosemary (née Robertson), formerly Bonsor, died 18th January at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, after a short illness. Donations for the natural treatment of cancer to Bristol Cancer Help Centre, Grove House, Cornwallis Grove, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4PG.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

THORNBACK - William (Bill) Rackstraw, finally dropped anchor aged 92 years at the Moorings RH, Cowes, Isle of Wight on January 19th. Beloved husband of Marjorie (née James), much loved father of John, Peter and Richard and loving grandfather of Sarah, Juliet, Matthew and James. Funeral Service Holy Trinity Church, Cowes, Tuesday January 26th, at 11 am. Family flowers only please, donations, if desired, for the Andrew Cassel Foundation, c/o Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Castle Hill, Cowes, PO31 7QU.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

GOUGH - There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for the life of the late Cecil E. F. Gough, CMG, on Saturday 30th January 1999 at 12.30pm, at the Parish Church of St Nicolas, Witham, Essex.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

VALENTIN - Fred, Chemical engineer, 10.1.1918 - 22.1.1998. Lovingly remembered by Nancy, Claire, Peter, Leo, Adele, Richard and Josh.

OBITUARIES

JACQUES LECOQ

Jacques Lecoq, mime artist, theatre director and teacher, died on January 19 aged 77. He was born in Paris on December 15, 1921.

From Etienne Decroux in *Les Enfants du Paradis* to Marcel Marceau, France has given the world some of its memorable images of the white-faced, poignant or comic mime. Jacques Lecoq was never a public figure, and almost never appeared on the large or small screen, and yet he belongs among the most significant exponents of an art form that he preferred to call, not mime, but corporeal expression.

He was, above all, a great teacher. The school that he founded in 1956, and which continues to this day, trained some 130 students a year in the art of using the body to expressive effect. Lecoq was not interested in turning out classic mimes or actors, but in developing the resources of physical vocabulary, with or without speech. His two-year course explored such areas as silent improvisation ("I ask them to say nothing the better to understand what lies behind words"), the use of masks, techniques of movement, and the spirit of comedy, melodrama and tragedy. No doubt the focus on unspoken expression was all the more acute for the cosmopolitan mix of English, French, German, Swedish, Italian, American and other nationalities (70 in all) attending the courses at 57, Rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, in northern Paris.

Those who learnt from the Lecoq way with actors form an equally rich and varied list. Among them are the members of Theatre de Complicite, Footsbarn, Mummenschanz, Steven Berkoff, Geoffrey Rush (Oscar winner for *Shine*) the writers Yasmina Reza (author of *Art*) and Eduardo Manet, and directors Christophe Marthaler, Jorge Laveilli, Luc Bondy and Ariane Mnouchkine of the Théâtre du Soleil. "I wasn't at his courses for long," Mnouchkine has said, "but it was as important to me as if I had spent ten years there."


Lecoq: developing the resources of physical vocabulary

From an early practice of sport and sports teaching Lecoq developed a keen awareness of the body and its mechanisms. During the Second World War, when training as a physical education instructor in Paris, he met Jean-Lous Barrault and the founders of Education through Drama (L'Education par le Jeu Dramatique), which involved a number of other key figures of postwar French theatre, such as Roger Blin and Marie-Hélène Dasté. Linked with Antonin Artaud, the movment aimed to explore a new theatrical approach to the body and the voice.

Lecoq's own interest in the stage grew in 1945 from his involvement with Travail et Culture alongside Yves Robert and the Frères Jacques. He now began working with Jean Dasté's troupe in Grenoble, acting as a kind of teacher of movement and gesture. From Dasté he learnt about Noh and the use of masks.

It was, already, a cosmopolitan career. In 1947, Lecoq taught theatrical expression in Germany, then in the following year went to Padua where he found a sculptor, Amleto Sartori, who agreed to make *commedia dell'arte* masks for him. He also became close to Giorgio Strehler, for whom he set up the the Piccolo Teatro theatre school. At the same time he befriended Dario Fo and did the occasional job at Cinecittà.

Coming back to France, Lecoq now set about creating his own mime school, one that would offer an alternative to what he saw as the "sclerosed" technique of Etienne Decroux, and which accepted a greater crossover than his contemporary, Marcel Marceau. The aim was, he said, to move "towards open mime and not towards the mime which is enclosed in its own silence."

Students were taught a series of challenging physical exercises, from mastering their diaphragm to acrobatics, but always with a view to extending possibilities rather than developing some kind of physical virtuosity. A key phase of the training was learning to clown. One by one, students were asked to make their fellows laugh: their almost inevitable failure was the first step in learning a kind of authenticity. Being a clown, Lecoq would explain, "is not a role you learn; you are a clown. So in the end the clown which belongs to them alone will be brought out . . . Once you can fully come to terms with what you are, your own territory, then you can make people laugh." In a similar way, using a neutral mask, Lecoq students learnt how the carriage and movements of the body could seem to impart expression to the otherwise blank face.

Ariane Mnouchkine has saluted Lecoq as a "master . . . but one who had that very rare ability to open up a path without necessarily having to take it himself." His own discretion was remarkable, and meant that he remained out of the public eye. Nor did Lecoq seek to be a guru: his school had other influential teachers, too. And while he did have his own one-man show, *Tout Bouge* ("Everything Moves"), in which "a lifetime's observation of body language is packed into 90 minutes, starting with the way we walk and ending with comic and tragic masks", performances were rare (he came to the Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1988). In France, finally, his statements on the theatre, *Le corps poétique*, were published only last year, and he managed to oversee the first two documentaries about his work, *Les Deux Voyages de Jacques Lecoq*, shortly before his death.

His true heritage lies in the enrichment of theatrical forms to which he contributed and, it is to be hoped, in the continuing vitality of his school which will remain open.

He is survived by his second wife Fay, by their daughter and two sons, and by a son of his first marriage.

MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT LOUDOUN

Major-General Robert Loudoun, CB, OBE, Representative Colonel Commandant, Royal Marines, 1983-84, and Director of the Mental Health Foundation, 1977-90, died on December 28 aged 76. He was born on July 8, 1922.

BOB LOUDOUN'S singularly active military career was more than matched by his achievements after retirement from the Royal Marines. Inspired by an affection for Yugoslavia acquired during the war, he became in 1989 a director of the British Yugoslav Society. The focus of this institution was shifted by civil war from cultural and student exchanges towards relief aid. Loudoun and other war veterans — some of whom owed their lives to Tito's partisans — raised funds which sent more than 25 trucks loaded with medical supplies to the stricken six republics. Many were driven by members of the society; at the age of 70 Loudoun himself took a truckload to Korcula accompanied by the late Sir Fitzroy Maclean and his wife Veronica.

He had also joined the Mental Health Foundation at the time of its formation through the merger of the Mental Health Trust and the Mental Health Research Fund, and became its director in 1977. By the time he retired in 1990, he had raised the foundation's charitable income from about £50,000 a year to well over a million, providing funds for research projects and enabling innovative rehabilitation and community aftercare programmes.



Robert Beverley Loudoun was educated at University College School, Hampstead, and joined the Royal Marines in late 1940, being selected for officer training in 1941. After the 2nd Battalion had been reorganised as No 43 Commando, it was sent to the Mediterranean in November 1943, and received a brief, effective and almost bloodless initiation into modern warfare when leading the beach assault at the Anzio bridgehead in January 1944. Having captured its objectives, the commando was withdrawn and redeployed to take a hill on the Garigliano River, suffering its first fatalities.

Even tougher times were to follow. With other units, 43 Commando was sent to the Dalmatian island of Vis, from where it conducted a number of assaults against other islands, which were generally occupied by larger numbers of heavily armed Germans, well dug in.

In charge of the commando's C Company, Loudoun made his first attack on the island of Mljet, which but two days later, he took a launch back by night to recover two lost signalmen. He was then wounded during a costly attack on the island of Brac, and was temporarily incapacitated. Brac was subsequently reinforced by more than 2,000 Germans, but a second assault was more successful, and by the autumn of 1944 the Germans had started to pull out of the Balkans.

In October, 43 Commando landed at Dubrovnik and took part in the harrying of the German retreat. After arduous advances against tenacious resistance, with much blowing up of roads and bridges behind the lines, the commando moved to Italy to rest and refit. Loudoun was mentioned in dispatches.

The commando's final major action of the war was the assault across the bleak marshes around Lake Commachio near the coast north of Ravenna. Loudoun, who was by now adjutant, took part in a bitter and difficult battle throughout April 2 and 3, 1945, with little natural cover to help the advance across minefields towards well-prepared German positions. In this action, the Royal Marines' tenth Victoria Cross — and the only one of the Second World War — was posthumously awarded to Corporal Thomas Hunter.

Appointed to 45 Commando, Loudoun arrived in the Far East shortly after the end of hostilities and served in Hong Kong, Malta, Africa and Palestine. He was granted a regular commission in 1948, thereafter following a conventional progression of appointments.

As a brigadier, his appointment embroiled him in Nato planning and exercises in Europe, including the initial reconnaissance of north Norway which heralded the Royal Marines' strategic shift to arctic warfare during the later decades of the Cold War.

As a major-general, his final tour was in command of Royal Marines training at Portsmouth, where he masterminded the move of the Royal Marines Museum to its splendid location at Eastney. He was appointed CBE on retirement in 1973.

He is survived by his wife Sue, whom he married in 1950, and their two sons.

ANATOLI RYBAKOV

Anatoli Rybakov, Russian author, died in New York on December 23 aged 87. He was born on January 1, 1911.

"IMAGINE Genghis Khan with a telephone," reflected the ageing Tolstoy, inadvertently prophesying his country's plight in the grip of 20th-century totalitarian bureaucracy. The advent of that grim eventuality — Stalin with all the instruments of repression to hand in an age of instant communication — was the subject of *Children of the Arbat* (1987), Anatoli Rybakov's most celebrated novel.

Describing the lives of a group of young school-leavers, growing up as Rybakov did in the Arbat district of central Moscow and launching out on to the troubled waters of the 1930s, the novel evokes the grim atmosphere of Stalin's most paranoid, most fearsome years. Its account of the Stalin terror has invited comparison with *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1956). Some reviewers even saw a kinship to *War and Peace* in the complexity of its plotting and organisation of historical events.

But, in truth, Rybakov has much more in common with such American "blockbuster" historical novelists as James Michener and Herman Wouk, than with either Solzhenitsyn or Tolstoy. His fidelity to historical events is impressive, but his characters remain resolutely one-dimensional.

Indeed, though he eventually won fame through his graphic description of the Stalin years, he had begun his literary life in the postwar Soviet Union as a run-of-the-mill socialist-realist hack. Born in Chernigov, Ukraine, into an assimilated Jewish family, Anatoli Naumovich Rybakov grew up in Moscow and went from school to the Moscow Institute of Transport Engineering.

In November 1933 he was arrested and sent to Siberia for three years, but this was for no dissident activity. Stalin was merely in the early stages of the paranoia which was to lead to the full-scale terror and purges of the later 1930s. Rybakov and those arrested with him were later to realise how lucky they were to escape with such light punishment.

After completing his sentence Rybakov was allowed to return from Siberia. But he was barred from residence in large towns and had to take a series of truck-driving jobs in rural areas. Call-up for army service after the German invasion in 1941 was almost a relief. He served as a transport officer with the 8th Guards Army for the rest of the war and was twice decorated.

While in the army he had begun to write, and he published his first novel, a children's adventure story entitled *Kortik* (translated as *The Dirk*) in 1948. With its zealous child protagonist, Misha, who thwarts a White Russian plot against the nascent Soviet state to become the leader of the newly founded Communist Pioneers, *Kortik* was an unimpeachably correct piece of socialist realism, firmly in the mould of Nikolai Ostrovsky's 1930s classic of Communist revolutionary endeavour, *How the Steel was Tempered*. Much admired by Stalin, it spawned a film, a play and a television programme, all scripted by Rybakov.

Its two successors completed a trilogy about the adventures of Misha, while a second trilogy introduced a new character Krosh and his schoolmates coping with adolescent life in the Soviet Union of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

At the same time Rybakov was writing for adults: *Voditeli* ("Drivers") appeared in the journal *Oktyabr* in 1950. Its theme, the problems of the workplace and the dignity of the leaders of socialist road haulage, expounded with great technical authenticity from Rybakov's own experience, made it a sure-fire candidate for a Stalin Prize.

In the 1960s Rybakov began work on *Deti Arbata* (translated as *Children of the Arbat*) and in 1966 it was announced that the first part of it was to be published in the journal *Novy Mir*, whose courageous editor Alexander Tvardovsky had persuaded Khrushchev to let him publish Solzhenitsyn's *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in 1962.

But by that time the brief Khrushchev thaw was already over and as the conservative Leonid Brezhnev tightened his grip on the reins of Soviet power, the possibility receded even further. An announcement in the next decade that *Oktyabr* would publish the novel was equally illusory, and it was not until the era of Gorbachev that publication could become a reality.

A less obviously contentious, though in the view of many a more subtle, novel *Tyazhelyi pesok* (translated as *Heavy Sand*) was, however, published by *Oktyabr* in 1978. It had an ostensibly anti-German and therefore pro-Soviet theme, the atrocities committed against Ukrainian Jews by the invading German armies in 1941 and 1942. But in the anti-Semitic climate of the Soviet Union in the late 1970s the theme was not popular, and Rybakov had to tone it down to imply that the Germans had treated the Jews no worse than anyone else.

The advent of Gorbachev and *glasnost* obviated the need for such trimming. With the publication of *Children of the Arbat* Rybakov found himself an overnight celebrity. It was the first of a trilogy which laid the blame for the failures of Soviet communism squarely at the door of Stalin. Its successors, *Fear* (1992) and *Dust and Ashes* (1996), continued the story of Sasha Pankratov, *Arbat*'s protagonist. But by that time Russia was suffering such massive economic problems under a democratic regime that the impact of the criticism of Stalin no longer carried the same force. Many adults were beginning to hanker after the old times when "things worked".

Nevertheless, for young Russian children the novels remain an important part of the revised Soviet history in a way that the more complex works of Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn could not be. And to do him justice, Rybakov never claimed to be of the literary or moral stature of those two brave men.

Anatoli Rybakov is survived by his second wife Tatiana, and by the two sons of his first marriage.

GEORGE POPOV

George Popov, MBE, acridologist, died on December 22 aged 76. He was born on August 22, 1922.

GEORGE POPOV was one of the great scientific travellers of the past 50 years. He spent most of his life travelling around Asia and Africa studying locusts and grasshoppers, and in pursuit of his entomological interests he stealthily became perhaps the most intrepid traveller of his time in the Arabian Peninsula and the remoter regions of Asia and Africa.

In his early years he made an amazing crossing of the Jaz Murian depression in southern Iran in midsummer with a single donkey for company. His achievements were recognised by the award of the Lawrence of Arabia Memorial Medal in 1995 by the Royal Society of Asian Affairs, and in 1997 the Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome awarded him a special medal for 50 years' work on locust control.

George Basil Popov was born of Russian parents in Mashhad in Iran, where his father worked in the Imperial Bank. After early studies at home he was educated at the American (Alborz) College in Tehran and at Tehran University. His father died at the outbreak of the Second World War, so he had to leave school. Being fluent in Russian, Farsi, French, English (and later Arabic), he became an interpreter.

He was then recruited to work for the British Locust Control unit in southern Iran, and so began his lifelong research career. He next became a member of the British Middle East Anti-Locust Unit in 1943, based in Cairo, and from there he travelled extensively in Iran and Saudi Arabia.

After ten years with the Desert Locust Survey and Control Organisation, based in Nairobi, he joined the Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome in 1958, as leader of a unit carrying out an ecological survey of the desert locust breeding areas from Senegal to Bangladesh and Georgia to Tanzania.

In 1964 he transferred to the Anti-Locust Research Centre in London (later the Centre for Overseas Pesticides Research), from where he undertook consultancies and projects on grasshopper research and control techniques in many parts of Africa and Asia, returning to Nairobi in 1982.

During the last major locust outbreak, in 1985-90, he advised on monitoring and control methods, principally in the Sahelian countries of North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. He later conducted ground assessments and ecological surveys of the affected areas, leading to the establishment of a data centre and introduction of remote sensing imaging as an aid to monitoring locust populations. He also participated in tests of various insecticides and biological control agents in Mali between 1986 and 1988.

As well as lecturing widely he published more than 50 articles, becoming recognised as one of the foremost acridologists in the world. In 1951 he was appointed MBE.

He was an unassuming man with a delightful sense of humour, but his gentleness concealed a tough core. In recent years, he suffered considerable pain and discomfort from more than one form of cancer, but he showed tremendous courage, continuing to work and travel.

He never married, but had a firm link with a family from Mali now living in London, to whom he was devoted and who were a great support to him for many years.

PERSONAL COLUMN

ON THIS DAY

January 22, 1948

The announcement that the battleships Queen Elizabeth, Valiant, Nelson *and* Rodney *and the battle-cruiser* Renown *were to be scrapped may have evoked regret but perhaps no astonishment. Three were veterans of the First World War.*

FIVE OLD WARSHIPS TO BE SCRAPPED

THE Admiralty announcement of the decision to scrap all the battleships of pre-war years except those which are in use as accommodation ships must evoke regrets but no astonishment.

Officers and men come to have a sentimental affection for famous ships in which they have served, and the general public, remembering the names of ships that time after time had a part in sea battles or amphibious operations, hear of their passing with no less regret. But the times are gone when warships can be preserved, as Nelson's *Victory* survives nearly two centuries after she was floated out of the dock in which she was built. A 30,000 ton battleship calls for considerable overhauling and maintenance to keep her afloat, even if she is never again to go to sea.

Three of the five capital ships to go are veterans of the 1914 war — the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Valiant*, and *Renown*. The other two, the *Nelson* and *Rodney*, are not much younger, for they were laid down in 1922; and though they both did magnificent service during the late war — the *Rodney* was one of the two ships that sank the *Bismarck* — they were never very satisfactory ships.

It is just as inevitable that all five should be scrapped now as that the *Lion* and the *Dreadnought* should have passed in 1919. The Admiralty estimates the saving in man-power by scrapping them instead of keeping them in reserve at about 1,000, and the 80,000 or so tons of scrap steel that will be recovered from their hulls will, of course, be most valuable in today's industrial conditions as raw material.

There is no hint in this action of any belief by the Admiralty that the day of the battleship as known hitherto is necessarily past. But though in the past obsolete or obsolescent capital ships have had a certain value in war it is difficult in the present state of the navies of the world to see any similar value for those that are to be scrapped today.

There will thus be little valid criticism of the Admiralty's decision to scrap these capital ships; but there may well be complaint of undue reticence regarding the action that is being taken in respect of other ships. Seven cruisers are to be scrapped, but the public is not to be allowed to know their names. A number of lesser warships are also to disappear under a similar veil. Parliament and public are not allowed to know the composition of the Royal Navy today, though it is doubtless well known to any foreign intelligence service that thinks it worth while to find out the facts.

NEWS

South African role for Mandelson

■ Peter Mandelson was on course to make a dramatic return to his role as election strategist by travelling to South Africa and working for a smooth transition to Nelson Mandela's successor. The job would see the former Trade Secretary acting as special adviser to the African National Congress, helping ensure the party's return to power and the election of Thabo Mbeki as president.........Page 1

Doctors rebel over Viagra

■ Doctors were urged to prescribe Viagra freely over the next six weeks before the Government can impose rationing of the anti-impotence drug. In defiance of Frank Dobson's intention to curtail prescriptions from March, the British Medical Association said impotent men going to their GP should be able receive the anti-impotence pill on the NHS.........Page 1

Hunt for children
Fifty Gurkhas joined the search in Hastings for the missing ten-year-olds Lisa Hoodless and Charlene Lunnon.......Pages 1, 5

Crash misses school
A village primary school in Nottinghamshire came within a split-second of disaster after an RAF Tornado jet collided in mid-air with a light aircraft.......Page 1

IRA meeting anger
Victims of IRA atrocities expressed outrage at a Minister's decision to meet relatives of an IRA unit killed while attacking a County Armagh police station..Page 2

Casualty list
More than four million people have sought details of their relatives and loved ones in the two months since the names of those killed in two world wars were posted on the Internet.......Page 3

Amnesty's plea
Extradition to Spain is the only way to bring General Pinochet to justice because Chile is unlikely to put him on trial, Amnesty International told the law lords....Page 9

Liberal starter
The campaign for the leadership of the Liberal Democrats began in acrimony yesterday when Nick Harvey, one of the leading contenders, was accused of jumping the starting-gun.......Page 10

Miners' rampage
Striking Romanian coalminers hijacked lorries and tore through barricades as police tried to block their march.......Page 12

Kosovo defiance
The head of the international monitoring mission in Kosovo defied a Serbian order to leave Yugoslavia and took journalists on a tour of army positions....Page 13

Rebel horror
A British worker who witnessed horrifying atrocities by drug-crazed youths when he was trapped behind rebel lines in Sierra Leone was rescued......Page 14

Mexican wave
When the Pope arrives in Mexico to a rapturous welcome the enthusiasm will conceal the strained violent relationship between the Mexican authorities and the church.......Page 15

Nelson under fire
Lord Nelson was criticised by Italian historians, who branded him a war criminal who had used "brutal, bloodthirsty methods" to put down a revolt.......Page 16

Clinton passion
President Clinton called on an old Arkansas friend to mount the last, impassioned speech for his defence, as the White House team cranked up emotion and rhetoric for a final attack.......Page 17

Waiting for Monet

■ Tempers were frayed and voices raised in the elegant surroundings of Burlington House as hundreds of Friends of the Royal Academy were forced to queue for a preview of the record-breaking Monet exhibition. The queue was four or five deep in places and snaked for hundreds of yards from the gallery. Many art-lovers had a wait of about two hours.....Page 6

JOHN COGILL/AP



Senator Michael Sullivan, the former Governor of Wyoming, inspects a guard of honour after becoming the US Ambassador to Ireland

GRE bid: Royal & Sun Alliance, the giant insurance group, is poised to bid around £3.5 billion for its rival Guardian Royal Alliance....Page 25

Chief goes: Laura Ashley, the troubled retail company, lost its sixth chief executive since 1990 but gained the Rev Pat Robertson, the television evangelist and former US presidential hopeful, as a non-executive director.......Page 25

Sears decided: Sears accepted an increased offer of £548 million from Philip Green and the Barclay brothers.......Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 shares index fell 83.30 points to 6022.3. The pound rose 0.41 cents to \$1.6518 and 0.09p against the euro to 70.12p. The sterling index rose to 99.6 from 99.5.......Page 28

Football: Nationwide is to sponsor the England team in a £15 million, four-year sponsorship deal with the Football Association.......Page 48

Tennis: Greg Rusedski lost to Paul Goldstein, a qualifier from the United States, in the second round of the Australian Open, his third defeat in four matches this year. Anna Kournikova still has problems with double faults.......Pages 46, 48

Athletics: Abel Anton, the world champion, will defend his Flora London Marathon title in one of the strongest fields ever assembled for the event.......Page 48

Snooker: Robin Hull, a former world junior champion, became the first player to miss the final black in a professional event with a maximum break available.......Page 46

Richard Morrison: "You don't have to be Mystic Morrison to foresee image manipulation becoming one of the big legal battlegrounds"—Dustin Hoffman's writ.......Page 32

Full measure: The RSC brings Shakespeare's most problematic play to the Barbican in a bold and sometimes brilliant production by Michael Boyd. Plus other theatre reviews.......Page 33

Pop 1: Like all beloved institutions, says Caitlin Moran, Top of the Pops should be cherished. Instead, it has become "dull yet grossly insulting".......Page 34

Pop 2: On the eve of a new British tour, Canadian band Barenaked Ladies talk about their rare combination of humour and creative excellence. Plus: new albums....Page 35

Jane Shilling: "What sort of life would Martians think I led were they to take a look in my top drawer".......Page 18

Double act: No one suspected that Catherine Manning, the perfect diplomatic hostess, was leading a double life.......Page 19

Speaker cornered: "Then Blair got a pager message from Alastair Campbell explaining that everyone speaks Estuary English." Joe Joseph on the chameleon speech of the Prime Minister.......Page 19

World brand: The BBC is giving the World Service a new image. But will this destroy its diversity?.......Page 39

Makeover man: Mike Matthew, the chief executive of IPC, tells Raymond Snoddy how the company is being reconstructed.......Page 36

World brand: The BBC is giving the World Service a new global image. But will this rebranding destroy its diversity?.......Page 39

Acting up: Students who did A-level exams on an RSC stage. Page 41

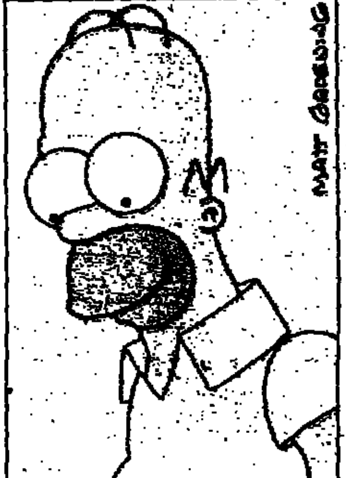
In their rebuttal before the Senate, the White House defence team put several dents in the House prosecutors' case for removing the President —*The New York Times*

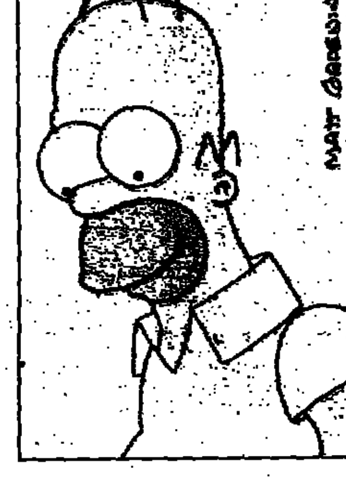
TOMORROW

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

■ **GOODBYE FLAB**
Why Hollywood's women build their muscles

■ **HELLO HOMER**
The new Simpsons comic strip





Preview: Cabin crew trainees learn about terrorists (ITV, 8pm) **Review:** Paul Hoggart on bite-size views of vets and fatties.......Pages 46, 47

The potent taxpayer
A diamond-shaped blue pill has sparked a necessary debate about the NHS.......Page 21

Just judges
The illegal detention and torture of two Zimbabwean journalists is a chilling abuse of power. Unless President Mugabe disowns this disgraceful act, he will be indelibly associated with it.......Page 21

World Wide honour
The Internet is a new and imaginative tool for tracing those who fell in two world wars.......Page 21

SIMON JENKINS
Constrained only by laws against defaming living persons (letting Daniel Barenboim off the *Hilary and Jackie* hook), they can lie with impunity and redress.......Page 20

SAM KILEY
Whether or not Sandline was implementing British policy then, it is quite clear that it should be now. The Foreign Secretary should learn from last year that the deployment of mercenaries in this blighted nation would be an act of genuinely ethical foreign policy.......Page 20

PHILIP HOWARD
A better criterion for Britishness is the insularity principle. This selects the things that Britons do that nobody else in the world would dream of copying, like cold baths in midwinter, regimental blazers with brass buttons and opening the bedroom window at night.......Page 20

Jacques Lecoq, mime artist; **Anatoli Rybakov**, author; **Major-General Robert Loudoun**; **George Popov**, acridologist.......Page 23

Power to censure EU Commission; nannies; pro-Pinochet demonstrators; rising through the ranks; Du Pré film; after Ashdown; Africa's legacy; Chambers' wit.......Page 21

4, 8, 14, 19, 28, 40. Bonus: 12

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,007

ACROSS
1 Ariadne's oddly selected helper (4).
3 One female unknown, introduced to acting, drying up (10).
9 By the sound of it, excessively short skirt (4).
10 Liberal hoped an end might be made of it (4-6).
12 Mistreat chap with a title (9).
13 Signal death of king and royal mistress (5).
14 Love action, showing no fear (7,5).
18 Let the blow be viewed as out of order here (5,3,4).
21 American cutter goes to island, it's assumed (5).
22 Material for making path, of standard weight (9).
24 Murderous female taking champagne on jet (5,5).
25 Call round (4).
26 Leaders of brave enemy shot in advance (10).
27 Blight has finally killed tree (4).

DOWN
1 Athenian clad in some brittle metal (8).
2 Set off from school in time (8).
4 Given a raise – initially unacceptably poor pay eventually doubled (5).
5 Vegetarian food for omnivore? (9).
6 Christmas present – open with anger (12).
7 Absolutely denied being wrong (6).
8 It's a nuisance having to go around and take a plane (6).
11 One with craft to be PM? (12).
15 Virtuous girl's sincerity (4,5).
16 What's for pudding? Is a lemon possibly the answer? (8).
17 Strewth! It's no good for women's power (8).
19 Various blood groups found among natives in African forest (6).
20 Fare from Middle East pupil affluently could afford (6).
23 A fellow without right dress (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,006

CULDESAC RATION
N A U H E A P
SCOREBOARD BEEF
O E W R S O N
DRAUGHTHORSE
R E Y E A E
DERV DORMOUSE
L I D A T V A
BULLYOFF EMMA
C G F S R E
STONYHEARTED
A I O I R R S
GNAT UNREADABLE
C R S E T W U
SEVERE SPANNERS

Times Two Crossword, page 48

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Sun rises: 7.52 am
Sun sets: 4.31 pm
Moon sets: 10.18 pm
Moon rises: 10.26 am
First quarter January 24
London 4.31 pm to 7.51 am
Bristol 4.42 pm to 8.01 am
Edinburgh 4.24 pm to 8.24 am
Manchester 4.32 pm to 8.08 am
Penzance 4.59 pm to 8.08 am




□ **General:** fog in central and southern England and Wales, then dry and sunny. Scotland and Northern Ireland will be cloudy with rain, and some cloud will spill into northwest England in the afternoon.
□ **London, SE & Central S England:** frost and fog clearing, then plenty of sun. Wind light, variable. Max 9C (48F).
□ **E Anglia, Midlands, E England:** fog lingering all day in places otherwise chilly but sunny. Wind light, variable. Max 6C (43F).
□ **Channel Islands, SW England, S Wales:** fog lifting, then dry with sunny spells. Wind light, variable. Max 10C (50F).
□ **N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** sunny spells. Wind SW, light to moderate. Max 8C (48F).
□ **Central N & NE England:** fog clearing, then sunny spells. Wind SW, light to moderate. Max 6C (43F).
□ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth:** blustery with sunny breaks, then rain later. Wind S, moderate to fresh. Max 6C (43F).
□ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll:** increasing cloud and rain. Wind S, moderate to fresh. Max 7C (45F).
□ **NE/NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** rain. Wind S, fresh to strong. Max 8C (46F).
□ **N Ireland:** increasing cloud and rain. Wind S, fresh. Max 8C (46F).
□ **Republic of Ireland:** sunny spells. Wind SW, moderate to fresh. Max 8C (46F).
□ **Outlook:** wet and windy.

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	4.3	0.01	7	45	b
Anglesey	4.5	-	8	46	s
Aspatria	3.3	0.01	6	43	sh
Aviemore	2.0	0.09	4	39	r
Belfast	6.4	0.01	6	43	s
Birmingham	5.6	-	7	45	b
Bognor R	4.8	0.01	9	48	s
Bournemouth	3.3	0.01	9	48	s
Bristol	3.1	-	10	50	s
Buxton	6.5	-	5	41	s
Cardiff	4.6	-	10	50	s
Clacton	6.0	0.01	8	46	b
Cleethorpes	6.9	-	9	48	s
Colwyn Bay	5.1	0.01	9	48	s
Cromer	6.9	-	8	46	s
Eastbourne	0.5	0.04	10	50	c
Edinburgh	5.7	-	7	45	s
Eskdalemuir	2.4	0.02	5	41	sh
Exmouth	7.1	0.01	9	48	s
Fishguard	7.6	0.01	7	45	s
Folkestone	1.3	0.07	9	48	c
Glasgow	4.6	0.04	8	46	sh
Guernsey	1.2	-	11	52	c
Hastings	0.1	0.04	9	48	fg
Hayling I.	5.8	0.01	10	50	s
Herne Bay	3.1	0.02	9	48	s
Hove	1.2	0.02	11	52	c
Hunstanton	7.1	-	7	45	s
Isle of Man	4.1	0.01	7	45	s
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	X	X	b
Jersey	-	0.20	10	50	c
Kinloss	4.4	0.01	6	43	sh
Leeds	5.6	-	8	46	s
Lerwick	1.5	0.42	6	43	sn
Leuchars	5.7	0.01	7	45	s
Littlehampton	3.8	0.01	11	52	s
London	3.8	-	10	50	b
Lowestoft	5.0	-	8	46	s
Manchester	6.0	-	8	46	s
Margate	0.3	0.02	9	48	fg
Morecambe	5.3	0.02	8	46	s
Newcastle	5.9	0.01	8	46	sh
Oxford	-	0.02	5	41	fg
Penzance	6.3	0.01	11	52	s
Prestatyn	4.8	-	9	48	s
Ross on Wye	1.4	-	5	41	fg
Saunton Sands	5.8	0.01	10	50	s
Scarborough	6.8	-	7	45	s
Shrewsbury	6.1	-	7	45	fg
Skegness	7.0	0.01	8	46	s
Southport	X	0.02	8	46	s
Stornoway	3.1	0.13	5	41	h
Swanage	5.1	0.01	9	48	s
Teignmouth	6.9	0.01	10	50	s
Tenby	5.7	0.01	7	45	s
Tiree	4.1	0.32	7	45	h
Torquay	6.0	0.02	11	52	s
Weymouth	3.5	-	10	50	s

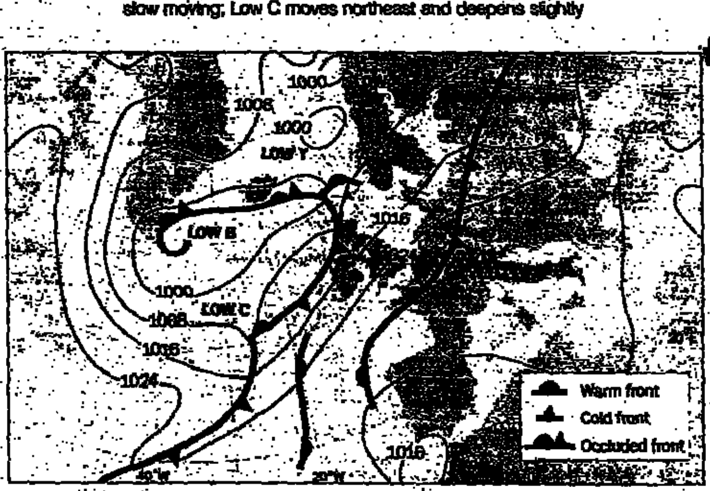
Yesterday's highest day max: Torquay 11C (52F); **Lowest day max** Loch Glascarnoch 4C (39F); **Wettest** Lerwick 0.42in; **Sunniest** Fishguard 7.6 hrs

	C	F	
Ajaccio	15	59	f
Akrotiri	15	59	s
Alex'dria	18	64	f
Algiers	15	59	f
Amst'dm	11	52	f
Athens	11	52	f
Bahrain	20	68	s
Bangkok	34	93	s
Barbados	28	82	f
Barcelona	13	55	s
Beirut	13	55	f
Belgrade	-1	30	fg
Berlin	9	48	s
Bermuda	23	73	s
Biarritz	14	57	f
Bordeaux	9	48	f
Brussels	10	50	f
Budapest	-2	28	fg
B Aires	25	77	c
Beijing	3	37	s
Cairo	18	64	f
Cape Tn	25	77	s
Chicago	0	32	f
Ch'church	20	68	X
Cologne	10	50	f
C'phagn	6	43	d
Corfu	14	57	s
Dublin	8	46	s
Dubrovnik	14	57	s
Faro	14	57	s
Florence	9	48	s
Frankfurt	2	36	c
Funchal	17	63	f
Geneva	1	34	fg
Gibraltar	14	57	f
Helsinki	4	39	c
Hong K	20	68	c
Innsbruck	5	41	s
Istanbul	4	39	r
Jeddah	26	79	s
Jo'burg	26	79	f
L Palmas	20	68	s
Le Touqt	11	52	f
Lisbon	14	57	c
Locarno	9	48	s
L Angeles	14	57	f
Luxembg	5	41	s
Luxor	22	72	s
Madrid	6	43	s
Majorca	15	59	s
Malaga	16	61	s
Malta	14	57	c
Melbourne	17	63	f
Mexico C	17	63	s
Miami	27	81	s
Milan	3	37	fg
Montreal	-1	30	s
Moscow	-4	25	c
Munich	4	39	s
Nairobi	28	82	f
Naples	14	57	s
N Delhi	12	54	fg
N York	7	45	s
Nice	15	59	s
Oslo	3	37	c
Paris	11	52	s
Perth	39	102	s
Prague	-2	28	fg
Reykjavik	-4	25	s
Rhodes	16	61	s
Rio de J	X		
Riyadh	19	66	s
Rome	12	54	s
Salzburg	0	32	s
S Frisco	13	55	f
Santiago	X		
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	1	34	s
Singapore	29	84	f
Stockholm	8	46	c
Strasbrg	3	37	s
Sydney	20	68	f
Tangier	15	59	s
Tel Aviv	13	55	c
Tenerife	19	66	c
Tokyo	15	59	s
Toronto	1	34	s
Tunis	15	59	c
Valencia	13	55	s
Vanc'ver	7	45	c
Venice	9	48	s
Vienna	-1	30	c
Warsaw	-2	28	fg
Wash'ton	8	46	f
Zurich	-2	28	fg

Temperatures at midday local time X = not available



Changes to the chart below from noon: Lows Y and A drift slowly north; Low B remains slow moving; Low C moves northeast and deepens slightly



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	4:20	4.1	16:24	4.3
Avonmouth	10:12	13.0	22:31	12.6
Belfast	1:48	3.3	14:01	3.8
Cardiff	9:58	12.0	22:17	11.7
Devonport	8:33	5.4	20:54	5.1
Dover	1:44	6.6	14:03	6.4
Dublin	2:25	3.8	14:38	4.1
Falmouth	8:04	5.2	20:25	4.9
Greenock	3:27	3.3	15:38	3.6
Harwich	2:35	3.9	15:03	3.9
Holyhead	1:05	5.3	13:24	5.6
Hull (Albert D)	9:18	8.4	21:27	8.6
Ilfracombe	8:58	9.0	21:19	8.6
King's Lynn	9:21	6.5	21:30	7.0
Leith	5:36	5.3	17:49	5.4
Liverpool	1:56	9.0	14:17	9.3
London Bridge	4:37	7.1	17:07	7.1
Lowestoft	-	-	12:40	2.3
Margate	2:40	4.8	15:13	4.6
Milford Haven	9:13	6.8	21:34	6.5
Newquay	8:07	6.8	20:29	6.5
Oban	8:39	3.9	20:48	3.6
Penzance	7:38	5.5	19:56	5.1
Portland	10:01	2.0	22:27	1.8
Portsmouth	2:13	4.6	14:28	4.6
Shoreham	2:05	6.2	14:10	6.1
Southampton	1:40	4.5	13:50	4.4
Swansea	9:15	11.9	21:36	11.5
Tees	6:46	9.7	18:52	9.9
Walton-On-Naze	2:22	4.1	14:54	4.1

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

هكذا من الإمل

THE TIMES 2

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY

BUSINESS
Costly drug shares offer no cure for faltering market
PAGE 29



ARTS
Crazy name, crazy guys: pop's Barenaked Ladies
PAGES 32-35



MEDIA
More suffering as Amanda takes a walk
PAGES 36-39

TELEVISION AND RADIO
Pages 46, 47

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft · FRIDAY JANUARY 22 1999

Board concedes defeat after buyer raises hostile offer and bags 38% stake

Sears backs Green's £548m bid

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM
RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

SIR BOB REID, chairman of Sears, yesterday accepted an improved offer for the retailing group worth £548 million — an increase of £29 million — from Philip Green and the Barclay twins, David and Frederick.

After a day of talks between the two sides, the Sears board agreed to accept 359p a share from January Investments (JIL). It was set up for the bid by Mr Green and the Barclays, and had a 340p a share bid rejected last week. Some late buying in the market ensured that by the end of the day, JIL owned 38 per cent of Sears. It already had 23 per cent of Sears in the bag after acceptance by Phillips & Drew last week. The shares closed at 354½p.

Sir Bob said: "The increased cash offer of 359p per share represents a fair deal for shareholders and is in line with the board's strategy to return value to them."

Aidan Barclay, who is the son of David and chairman of JIL, said: "We are delighted that our increased offer has been recommended unanimously by the board of Sears. We consider that this decision provides both clarity to employees and certainty of a full value to Sears shareholders."

The deal is likely to mean that Sears directors will receive large payouts from their options, which, in most cases, are triggered by a takeover. David Defty, finance director, could be in line for as much as £1.5 million, while Roger Groom, the property director, could collect up to £1.18 million. Derek Lovelock, head of the clothing business, could get £697,000 from his options.

Sears, which JIL will de-list from the stock market, owns the Freemans catalogue company, the Warehouse, Wallis, and Richards women's wear chains, the Adams children's wear chain, a property business and the Creation credit card business. Sears last week announced the sale of Creation to Banque Nationale de Paris and Coginoga for £141 million.

JIL is believed to be considering continuing with the sale of Creation, and is understood to have held talks about the sale of Freemans with Otto Versand of Germany. N Brown, chaired by Sir David Alliance, is also extremely keen to get its hands on Freemans, which it made one attempt to buy from Sears.

Mr Green, who is chief executive of JIL, said yesterday that he had not pre-sold any part of the company: "I want to go and meet the management of each part of the company," he said, before making any decisions on what would be best for them. He said that the price had been raised "to save all the uncertainty. We felt it was best to get an agreed deal."

JIL is being partly funded by Mr Green's wife Cristina, and by the Barclays, who own the Ritz hotel as well as *The Scotsman*, *Scotland on Sunday* and *Sunday Business* newspapers. The bulk of the financing comes from loans raised through BankBoston and the Bank of Scotland.

Mr Green's other businesess are Owen Owen, the department store company based in the North West, and the Mark One chain of discount fashion stores.

The terms represent a significant premium to the low of 146½p at which Sears shares traded in October. However, the shares traded at 382p as recently as June 1998. In 1995 the buoyancy of the retail sector and optimism about the outlook for retailers lifted the shares close to 760p.

Rise and fall, page 26
Commentary, page 27

RSA ready with £3.5bn offer for rival GRE

BY JASON NISSÉ

ROYAL & SUNALLIANCE, the giant insurance group, is poised to bid about £3.5 billion for rival Guardian Royal Exchange after being told it has made the highest offer in the auction of the insurer.

The offer, priced at about 390p per GRE share, has topped rival bids from other interested parties such as Axa, the French group, Allianz of Germany and AIG, the US insurance giant. The nearest offer was understood to have been no higher than 370p a share. GRE shares were unmoved at 354½p yesterday.

GRE asked Morgan Stanley, the US investment bank, to carry out an auction of the company after receiving informal approaches from various rivals last year.

The groupdecided the GRE could not continue in its current form — being smaller and more diversified than most rivals. It said it would announce the result of the auction by the end of this month.

RSA — which was itself created by a merger between Royal Insurance and Sun Alliance in 1996 — is to be given exclusive negotiating rights to conclude a deal, though it is not yet in a position to put an offer to shareholders.

Any deal would need to be financed by a rights issue by RSA of up to £2 billion. This might not be well received by the market, given that RSA shares have fallen from a high of 808p last March to stand at 487p, down 11½p, yesterday.

The bid could also face a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and there would be concerns about job losses, which could be as high as 5,000 as RSA integrated GRE's general insurance business.

The market is also concerned about the problems RSA had in merging the Royal and Sun Alliance operations. After the merger, the group had two chief executives, Roger Taylor and Roger Gamble. This structure did not work and both left, with Bob Mendelson being promoted from the US business to become sole chief executive of RSA.

The GRE board, led by new chairman, Sir Colin Chandler, may yet decide that none of the bids put forward give full value to the company. The alternative to selling the company in one go is for GRE to sell its businesses piecemeal.

A circular from HSBC Securities, the broker, published yesterday, suggests that GRE could be worth as much as 473p a share.

AXA has said it is interested in the general insurance business and Prudential is understood to be keen to buy other parts of GRE, including the burgeoning healthcare operation.

Neither GRE nor RSA would comment on what they called "market speculation" last night.

ANTHONY UPTON



Nick Prettejohn played a key part in the reconstruction and renewal process that saved Lloyd's

Sandler hunts top City job after quitting Lloyd's

BY ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

RON SANDLER is quitting as chief executive of the Lloyd's insurance market. He is being replaced by Nick Prettejohn, a 38-year-old Lloyd's insider.

Mr Sandler has been in the job for four years and is credited with saving the insurance market from collapse. He has not got a job to go and refused to comment about specific future employment possibilities. However, he said: "I would like to return to running a business rather than running a market."

However, he has already been linked with the current vacancy for a chief executive at Barclays Bank. Similar vacancies exist at Cable & Wireless Communications and Rank.

Mr Sandler plans to remain at Lloyd's until the summer. He will not receive compensation for loss of office.

During his tenure at Lloyd's Mr Sandler attracted sharp criticism from names, the traditional personal providers of capital backing insurance underwriting, who have been progressively displaced by companies, so-called corporate capital.

Christopher Stockwell, a spokesman for disaffected names, said: "A number of names may miss Mr Sandler's analytical skills but many will not be sorry to see such an ardent supporter of corporate capital move on."

But Michael Deeny, chairman of the Associations of Lloyd's Names, the leading names' pressure group, said: "Ron worked hard ... and played a vitally important role in saving Lloyd's." He added that Mr Prettejohn was a "brilliant young man" who he was happy to welcome to the post.

Mr Prettejohn joined the executive team at Lloyd's in 1995 as head of strategy. He is described as playing a key role in the reconstruction and renewal process that saved Lloyd's from oblivion. He was also involved in the development of Equitas, the body that re-insured troublesome pre-1992 losses and was pivotal in the R&R project.

Mr Prettejohn is a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford. He has a first class degree in philosophy, politics and economics. He began his career as a management consultant with Bain & Co, was a director of Apax Partners, the venture capitalist, and also spent a year as director of corporate strategy at NFC, the transport company.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6022.3	(-83.3)
Yield	2.72%	
FTSE All Share	2729.03	(-31.54)
Nikkei	14245.42	(+217.37)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9327.42	(-8.49)*
S&P Composite	1246.23	(-10.39)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4[illegible]%*	(4[illegible]%)
Long bond	101[illegible]*	(101[illegible])
Yield	5.14%*	(5.17%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5[illegible]%	(5[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	120.08	(119.53)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6515*	(1.6458)
London:		
$	1.6519	(1.6474)
€	1.4260	(1.4238)
SFr	2.2882	(2.2868)
Yen	186.99	(186.98)
£ Index	99.6	(99.5)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.1576*	(1.1572)
SFr	1.3865*	(1.3875)
Yen	113.75*	(112.89)
$ index	104.0	(104.3)

Tokyo close Yen 113.07

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Apr)	$10.90	($10.65)

GOLD

London close	$288.15	($286.15)

Exchange rates .... Page 26
* denotes midday trading prices

Zeneca shares soar to record

Zeneca shares reached a new high as the company took a big step towards completing its proposed merger with Astra of Sweden. AstraZeneca, as the enlarged pharmaceuticals group will be known, will be Britain's fifth-largest company. Page 26

Beer bid lifted

Marston Thompson & Evershed rejected an increased £290 million offer from Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, setting the scene for what is expected to be a tight finale to this increasingly bitter battle. Page 27; Tempus, page 28

On-Line pair sell £1m shares

BY FRASER NELSON

ON-LINE, the Internet games producer whose shares had soared 2,084 per cent this month alone, crashed back to earth yesterday — but only after its directors sold £966,000 of shares.

Michael Hodges and Clement Chambers, co-founders of the company, said they were "forced" to sell their shares at between 176p and 250p apiece to satisfy market demand.

The shares, which started the month at 12½p, fell 144½p to 129p yesterday and are expected to drop further today.

Mr Hodges raised £240,000 in cash from disposing of 100,000 shares. Three weeks ago, the same stake would have raised £12,500.

Mr Hodges said Mr Chambers, who has sold a total £726,000 in shares, has agreed to exercise newly-granted share options — effectively hanging on to £246,000 in shares after passing the money to the company. Mr Hodges is keeping the money he raised from the sale.

Analysts and dealers have been baffled by the surge in On-Line shares. They are amazed that the company did not suggest creating new shares for a public offering at its Wednesday meeting, rather than allowing the directors to sell.

One said: "The two of them have just earned enough to retire on, and they are saying 'this hurts us more than it hurts you'. The whole thing is bizarre."

Their disposals were carried out on Wednesday, when On-Line shares hit their high of 273½p. The deals were not announced until after the market had closed yesterday.

Mr Hodges and Mr Chambers own 65 per cent of the company's shares between them. It is now capitalised at £4.2 million.

Bank loans at record level

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BANK lending to house buyers set a record in December, usually a slow month, suggesting that cuts in interest rates have breathed new life into the housing market.

The British Bankers' Association said the figures, showing a record £1.21 billion increase in net mortgage lending, were "remarkable". Separate figures from the Building Societies Association also tended to point to a revival in the housing market with mortgage approvals up in December.

Bank lending increased overall by £5.5 billion, far above the recent monthly average of £2.95 billion, the BBA said. The strength was not just in mortgage lending, with demand for credit from industry and commerce, particularly among property and construction companies, rising.

Some of the growth in mortgage lending resulted from refinancing, according to the BBA, but nevertheless December's rise was well above the recent monthly average of £1 billion, suggesting an element of genuine new demand.

Yesterday's figures from building societies were not as buoyant overall as those from banks, suggesting that banks may be gaining market share. The BSA said that gross mortgage advances totalled £1.49 billion in December compared with £1.62 billion in November while net advances fell to £120 million from £534 million.

Adrian Coles, BSA director-general, said that, given the scope for further interest rate cuts, borrowers might find the housing market particularly affordable this year.

Separate figures from the Bank of England showed that M4 broad money supply rose 0.8 per cent in December. The annual rate of growth fell to 8 per cent from 8.3 per cent, the lowest level since June 1995.

Sixth chief goes at Laura Ashley

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LAURA ASHLEY, the troubled retail company, lost its sixth chief executive since 1990 yesterday, but gained the Rev Pat Robertson, the well-known television evangelist and former US presidential hopeful, as a non-executive director.

Mr Robertson, who has extensive business interests, is believed to have been asked to join the board by John Thornton, the Laura Ashley chairman and a senior banker at Goldman Sachs. Mr Roberson is also believed to know Kay Peng Khoo, the chairman and chief executive of Malaysian United Industries (MUI), whichowns 40 per cent of Laura Ashley. Dr Khoo is also to become a non-executive director.

Mr Robertson holds two million shares — equivalent to about 0.5 per cent — in the form of 400,000 American Depository Receipts.

Victoria Egan, who was chief executive for just five months, is leaving for personal reasons having found it difficult to settle in London.

Mrs Egan, who previously worked for MUI, took over from David Hoare, the company doctor who was asked to stabilise the company after the departure of Ann Iverson, the high-profile American who launched an ill-advised expansion into the US.

Mrs Egan will be replaced by Kwan Cheong Ng, a Laura Ashley non-executive director who runs the retailing arm of MUI.

The company revealed some disastrous trading figures yesterday. In the 24 weeks to January 16, like-for-like sales were down 13 per cent. Total sales were down 16 per cent.

Mrs Iverson's US expansion is being slowly unravelled. By the end of this month it will have closed or relocated 19 of the 32 larger stores. Laura Ashley shares slipped ½p to 12p, compared with 211p in 1997.

Rise and fall of the Sears that Clore built

IT IS EASY to forget just how large Sears once was. Only a decade ago it was still Britain's leading retailer. Its 4,000 stores dominated many high streets and gave it even more outlets than the Post Office.

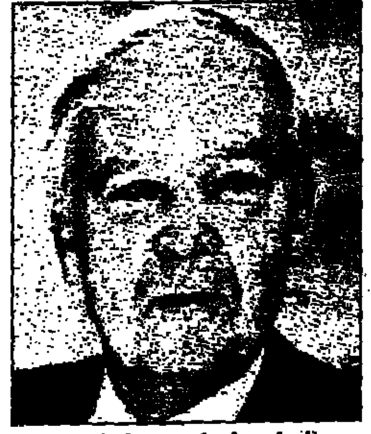
By comparison, the Sears that Philip Green and the Barclay brothers are buying is a sadly shrunken thing of just a few clothing chains and the Freemans catalogue business.

In its heyday, the British Shoe Corporation, a now defunct Sears subsidiary, sold as many as one in four pairs of shoes in the UK. It traded as Freeman Hardy Willis, Trueform, Lilley & Skinner, Manfield, Roland Cartier, Dolcis, Bertie, Curtess and Shoe City.

Sears's menswear chains included Fosters, Hornes, and Your Price. Its women's clothes chains included Miss Selfridge, Wallis and Warehouse, all of which remain in the group. The company also owned Olympus Sport, and the jewellers Garrard and Mappin & Webb. Other names it once owned include Lewis's department stores, sold in 1988, and William Hill, the bookmaker, sold for £331 million in December of that year.


Clore: ran Sears in its heyday


Strong: damaged by Facia deal


Reid: chairman during decline

The decline of Sears arguably began many years before the current management joined the group. The true glory days were with Sir Charles Clore, the property magnate who bought the J Sears (True Form Boot) company in 1954 and ran it, aided by of his trusted lieutenant, Leonard Sainer, until his death 20 years later.

Sir Charles's legacy lived on in the company until four years ago through Geoffrey Maitland Smith. He was chairman for nine years until handing over to Sir Bob Reid in 1995, and had been a board member for 25 years, since Sir Charles's time.

With the group seen to be floundering, Michael Pickard began to make some changes when he was brought in as chief executive in the late Eighties. It was he who sold Mappin & Webb and William Hill, and he also introduced Olympus Sport and Adams, the childrenswear chain, which is still part of the group.

When he was succeeded by Liam Strong in 1992, the appointment was well received, and the shares rose. The honeymoon did not last long. The most damaging incident for Mr Strong, who finally left the group two years ago, came when Facia, the retail business built by Stephen Hinchliffe, collapsed and the leases on 380 shoe shops that Mr Strong had sold to Facia reverted to Sears. Other sales of businesses — notably to Philip Green — were viewed as badly timed.

Sir Bob's chairmanship of Sears saw it go into a sorry decline. An attempt to sell Freemans failed and a proposed demerger last year was pulled because it, too, would have failed. Selfridges, which was demerged, has underperformed the market. Trading by what is left of the group has limped along. For once, calling shareholders — now able to exit Sears at 359p a share — "long-suffering" is not an overstatement.

SARAH CUNNINGHAM

Zeneca's shares soar on merger progress

By PAUL DURMAN

SHARES of Zeneca reached a new high of £29.33 during trading yesterday, as the former drugs arm of ICI took a big step towards completing its proposed merger with Astra of Sweden.

AstraZeneca — as the enlarged pharmaceuticals group will be known — is set to become Britain's fifth-largest company. Merger documents were issued to shareholders yesterday. The shares ended the day up 28p at £28.62, compared with a price of £18.60 in October.

Zeneca, said that the deal with Astra would create "a winning combination" and the third-largest pharmaceutical company in the world. The proposed company, which will report its results in dollars, has a stock market value of about £48 billion.

Sir David Barnes, Zeneca's chief executive, dismissed the chances of the deal being blown off course by a hostile offer for either partner. He said: "If someone is going to intervene, I would be the last to know. But do I regard it as a real possibility? No. I don't."

Yesterday's closing share price values values Sir David's stake at almost £6 million, even before his share options are included.

Zeneca also said its trading performance for 1998 was in line with market expectations. US pharmaceutical sales were 21 per cent ahead, with Zestril becoming the most prescribed hypertension drug in its class. Sales of cancer drugs were also strong.

The agrochemicals division finished the year strongly. The speciality chemicals business, which is up for sale, recorded lower sales than in 1997.

Detailed third-quarter results, published for the first time, showed that the strength of sterling reduced Zeneca's underlying pre-tax profits by 4 per cent to £845 million after nine months of 1998. At constant currencies, profits would have been up 9 per cent.

Sir David, who is to be deputy chairman of AstraZeneca, said the full-year cost of the strong pound is likely to be about £130 million. He said that profits would have been about £300 million higher but for the rise in the pound over the past two years. Tom McKillop is to be the company's chief executive.

Zeneca's shareholders will be asked to approve the deal with Astra on February 18.



Tom McKillop, chief executive designate of AstraZeneca, reported a 21 per cent rise in Zeneca's pharmaceutical sales in the US

Novartis prepared for a major deal

NOVARTIS, the Swiss healthcare group, yesterday expressed its willingness to make a big strategic deal as it reported 1998 sales that disappointed analysts' expectations (Paul Durman writes).

Raymond Breu, chief financial officer, said: "You will always have a stream of smaller transactions. Once in a while you have larger transactions. That is part of growing your business and defending your leading positions."

Novartis, formed from the merger three years ago of Ciba and Sandoz, has been suggested as a rival partner for Zeneca, which is planning a £48 billion merger with Astra of Sweden.

Novartis' sales grew by only 2 per cent to SwFr31.7 billion (£13.9 billion) although this represented a 5 per cent improvement in Swiss francs. Sales fell by 3 per cent in the final quarter.

Analysts had forecast an annual sales increase of up to 5 per cent.

The group's shares fell 6 per cent in early trade.

Monsanto suffers charges of $800m

MONSANTO, the controversial US agribusiness that is a leading producer of genetically engineered plants, has disclosed the price of its phenomenal year of expansion, reporting charges of more than $800 million (£485 million) for restructuring and write-offs (Carl Mortished writes).

The company said that charges of $625 million in the fourth quarter would cover the cost of 1,700 job losses and the disposal of assets. These are expected to save $160 million a year for the company.

Monsanto is also taking a $233 million hit for research and development write-offs relating to last year's multibillion dollar acquisition spree, which included the takeover of Cargill's international seed business. The write-offs left Monsanto with a post-tax loss of $603 million, compared with last year's $5 million profit.

Monsanto scored a political victory in Britain yesterday when a House of Lords committee endorsed the use of genetically modified crops.

Nissan to go ahead with £215m Sunderland plan

By ADAM JONES

NISSAN, the debt-ridden Japanese car manufacturer, warned yesterday that 1998 profits from its UK manufacturing operation will be less than half the £77 million in 1997 because of the strength of sterling.

Amid speculation that Ford might bid for its ailing rival, Nissan — which has debts of about £12.5 billion — held talks with workers at its factory in Sunderland to reassure them that an investment programme is going ahead.

Nissan will take on 800 staff at Sunderland this year to prepare for the launch of the new Almera model, which will be built alongside the Primera and the Micra, its best seller in Europe.

The Sunderland factory is widely seen as being the most productive outside Japan, even though it is not heavily automated. It already employs about 4,300 workers.

Recruitment for the new model, which required a £215 million investment, will take place in the summer. All staff at the plant will be retrained.

Despite the profits fall, Nissan sold 106,478 cars here in 1998, five per cent more than in 1997.

The Sunderland plant also exports heavily to the Continent. It will have capacity to build 350,000 cars a year after the new model is introduced.

UK car exports top 1m

UK CAR output rose last year, with exports exceeding a million for the first time. However, there was a big decline last month, amid temporary factory closures and short-time working (Christine Buckley writes).

A total of 1.74 million cars were made in 1998, a rise of 3 per cent on 1997. Those built for export rose 6.1 per cent, to 1.02 million, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Production of commercial vehicles fell 4.4 per cent, to 227,379. The home market fell 7.3 per cent, to 124,538.

December car production fell 11.6 per cent, to 114,260, with the number of cars built for the home market down 31.4 per cent, to 40,996.



IN Business Life TOMORROW

Who is this woman and why does she go to nightclubs carrying a video camera?

Mirror rejects £900m RIM bid

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

THE board of The Mirror Group yesterday rejected as inadequate the £900 million bid from Regional Independent Media, publisher of the *Yorkshire Post*, but left the door open for further negotiations.

RIM has also agreed to assume £500 million debts, lifting the total value of its offer to £1.4 billion. RIM, which is run by Chris Oakley, former chief executive of Midland Independent Newspapers, now part of the Mirror, will be given further information on which to base a formal offer.

Yesterday the Mirror board received two new independent valuations of the group. Both, it is believed, place a higher value on the Mirror Group than the RIM offer, but the difference is not thought to be great enough to derail a possible deal.

RIM is backed by Candover, the venture capital group, and by the Soros Fund, the investment vehicle of George Soros, and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

Mirror Group owns three national newspapers as well as the *Daily Record* in Scotland, *The Newsletter* in Belfast and Midland Independent Newspapers.

Trinity, the largest regional newspaper group, which broke off talks with Mirror earlier this month, was planning a all-share offer.

A share deal is preferred by Phillips & Drew, the largest Mirror shareholder with more than 22 per cent. A number of other shareholders would probably be happy with RIM's cash if agreement can be reached on the valuation of the company.

Mirror shares fell 3p to 198½p yesterday.

Lookers hit by falling car prices

LOOKERS, the motor retail group based in Manchester, blamed a slide in used car prices for reduced full-year profits, adding that it expects car prices to continue slipping this year. However, Craig McKinney, chairman, added that January orders are at a similar level to last year and he expects a boost from the introduction of twice-yearly registrations which begin in March. "This year is likely to be similar to 1998. There will be continuing pressure on prices of new products and that will come through to the used car market," he said.

In the year to September 30, the group reported pre-tax profits down 4 per cent at £8.6 million (£9.0 million) on turnover on continuing operations of £584.3 million. The figures were hit in part by a 40 per cent drop in business at its agricultural machinery division, which saw losses of £250,000. New car sales increased by 7.5 per cent due mainly to a large increase in sales in the less profitable fleet sector. Used car sales increased 10 per cent on the previous year. The final dividend is unchanged at 5.65p, maintaining the total at 8.25p. Earnings were unchanged at 15.6p a share.

Halifax joint venture

HALIFAX has announced a 50/50 joint venture with Cetelem, a Paris-based specialist in the European consumer credit market. The new company, to be called Halifax Cetelem Finance, will begin trading in the third quarter of 1999 and will offer credit for the purchase of durable goods at the point of sale. It is the latest in a string of Halifax joint ventures aimed at exploiting the bank's strong brand. Cetelem is a wholly owned subsidiary of Paribas. It specialises in consumer finance, managing accounts in France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Benelux countries. In 1997 its total funds under management were about £8.2 billion.

Tadpole sinks lower

TADPOLE TECHNOLOGY, the specialist computer manufacturer, yesterday disappointed the City by reporting a rise in pre-tax losses from £3.5 million to £3.7 million for the year ended September 30. Sales fell 30 per cent to £9.4 million, while losses per share fell from 10.3p to 6.6p. The company's shares, which traded at 307p in 1995, fell 0.75p to 11.5p yesterday. Tadpole said it was now focused on two kinds of computers: those which used the Unix computer language, and those which used the JAVA language. The company concluded that 1998 had been "a significant year in realising strategic goals".

ITG wins licence

SHARES in Internet Technology Group (ITG), the Internet service provider, rose by 22 per cent, to 172½p, after the company was awarded a telecoms licence by the Department of Trade and Industry. The licence will allow ITG to operate its own international telecoms network, and will therefore improve the company's margins on corporate Internet services. The company already has a high-capacity transatlantic link between London and New York, operated under a temporary licence.

Enterprise cheer

SHARES in Enterprise Inns, the tenanted pub operator, rose 16½p to 379p after an upbeat trading statement. At its annual meeting, Hubert Reid, chairman, told shareholders that Christmas and new year trading had hit budget and the integration of Mayfair Taverns, acquired in October, had been completed "ahead of our expected timetable". He added: "Operating profit for the first quarter was ahead of expectations and earnings are anticipated to benefit further from the increasingly benign interest rate movement."

Takeover at Division

DIVISION GROUP, the loss-making supplier of computer-aided design and manufacturing technology, has succumbed to a £28 million takeover by America's Parametric Technology, a software company which is listed on Nasdaq. The offer is worth 40p a share, compared with Wednesday's close of 35½p and a 12-month high of 63¾p. Yesterday Division reported increased pre-tax losses of £3.8 million for the year to the end of October, compared with a £1.78 million loss in the previous year. There is again no dividend.

Daejan holds dividend

DAEJAN HOLDINGS, the property group, is maintaining the interim dividend at 19p after reporting pre-tax profits little changed at £12.6 million for the six months to the end of September, against £12.9 million previously. Earnings were 54.2p a share, down from 55.6p. The company said the results reflect a change of policy in offering residential units for letting rather than for sale. Daejan shares, which hit a 12-month high of £17.10 in July, were unchanged at £10.90 yesterday.

Wiggins flies in US

WIGGINS GROUP, the property company that owns Kent International Airport, has agreed to acquire a 50-year lease on Smyrna Airport in Nashville, Tennessee, for an undisclosed sum. The airport handles 80,000 take-offs and landings each year, mainly corporate jets, jet maintenance and freight shipments. Wiggins also reported interim pre-tax profits of £634,000, down from £1.12 million previously when results benefited from property disposals. Earnings were 0.08p a share (0.16p). The dividend is again passed.

BT switches to Ericsson

BT has placed an order worth up to £270 million with Ericsson for high performance switches to expand its network capacity to meet the anticipated growth in Internet, high-speed data and video services. The switches will be deployed over the next four years, with the first one scheduled to go live in June. The investment is in addition to the £800 million expenditure BT announced last May to extend significantly its core optical fibre transmission network. BT spends about £2 billion a year on network improvements and overall expansion.



Divine guidance for Laura Ashley?

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE REV PAT ROBERTSON, the new Laura Ashley director appointed yesterday, is sure to add a splash of colour to the retailer's rather gloomy balance sheet. But shareholders and shoppers may well ask what he can do to improve finances — short of summoning divine help.

The company described Mr Robertson as "a noted media pioneer, educator, philanthropist and religious broadcaster". This only hints at the unique role he plays in American culture and politics.

After his unsuccessful bid to be elected as the Republican Party's presidential candidate in 1988, he carved out a niche as political commentator extraordinaire. From his weekly televisual pulpit on the *700 Club* programme, he preaches Christian fundamentalism and chastises President Clinton. For two decades, Mr Robertson has been one of the strongest voices of ultra conservatism in America, a position he has expanded and fortified as chairman of the Christian Coalition, as much a business as it is a political lobby group.

Mr Robertson has wide-ranging business interests, controlled and sometimes headed by family members. The Robertsons own a refinery in California and companies in Africa and China, in addition to two million shares of a certain small English clothes retailer.

Until last year, Mr Robertson also controlled International Family Entertainment, a cable television company he founded. The business was sold to The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, for $1.7 billion (£1 billion).

His personal wealth has allowed Mr Robertson to remain a fixture in US politics far beyond the normal shelf-life of an unelected campaigner.

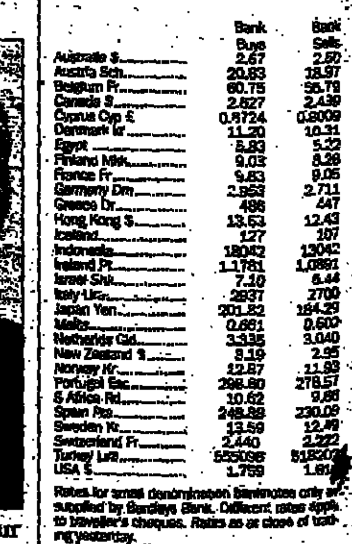
His particular talent is to seize a popular issue and become identified with the cause. He was one of the most fervent anti-abortion activists. This week, he adopted the millennium bug for his purposes.

But his biggest fight recently has been over the sins of the President. Mr Robertson was one of the first mainstream commentators calling for impeachment to combat "moral degeneracy".

Last year the Christian Broadcasting Network agreed to make a "substantial payment" to the Internal Revenue Service. The taxman had conducted an investigation into improper political activities during Mr Robertson's presidential bid.

All valuable business experience, no doubt.


Robertson: splash of colour



EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.67	2.50
Austria Sch	20.83	18.97
Belgium Fr	60.75	56.79
Canada $	2.627	2.439
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8724	0.8009
Denmark Kr	11.20	10.31
Egypt	5.83	5.32
Finland Mkk	9.03	8.28
France Fr	9.83	9.05
Germany Dm	2.953	2.711
Greece Dr	486	447
Hong Kong $	13.63	12.43
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	18042	13042
Ireland Pt	1.1781	1.0891
Israel Shk	7.10	6.44
Italy Lira	2937	2700
Japan Yen	201.82	184.29
Malta	0.661	0.602
Netherlds Gld	3.335	3.040
New Zealand $	3.19	2.95
Norway Kr	12.87	11.93
Portugal Esc	298.80	278.57
S Africa Rd	10.62	9.88
Spain Pta	248.88	230.09
Sweden Kr	13.59	12.49
Switzerland Fr	2.440	2.222
Turkey Lira	555098	518207
USA $	1.759	1.61[illegible]

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

When fast talking had to stop



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

So Sears has gone. Can Laura Ashley be far behind? These two companies have far more in common than the desperate "Sale" signs currently splashed across their shop windows. Both are sorry tales of inept management and ineffective shareholders. The current retail downturn may have added to their problems but in both cases, it is the company and not the consumer that is culpable for shredding shareholder value.

Between them, they have provided lavish rewards to some of the most incompetent chief executives ever to have been given desk space. Just imagine how much faster either company might have been brought to its knees had it been able to employ both Liam Strong and Anne Iverson *simultaneously*. What a wonderful double act that would have been: Mr Strong deploying rafts of expensive consultants to devise duff — but expensive — strategies and Ms Iverson rolling them out into huge new, unwanted, stores, pausing only to don her leathers and pose for Vogue.

The boards of both companies were bamboozled by their fast-talking chief executives, although Laura Ashley was at least quicker to spot the flaws in Ms Iverson's tactics than Sears was in rumbling Liam Strong.

Sir Bob Reid supported Strong when his failings as a leader and a manager were painfully clear to the outside world. But Sir Bob tends to take a blinkered view of life. His non-executives appear to be completely blindfold, for they sat and watched as the business that Sir Charles Clore had built up was gradually shrunk to its current pitiful state. Lord Tebbit may have been a feisty politician but he sat on the Sears board for 12 years without, apparently, raising a voice of dissent.

Despite Sir Bob Reid's recent insistence that Sears shares were worth between £5 and £6, yesterday he recommended an offer of 359p as "a fair deal for shareholders". It certainly represents the fairest treatment they have had for some time. Given Philip Green's reputation as one of the sharpest operators, it is worth noting that, not so long ago, the shares languished below 150p. If he is now prepared to pay so much more, he clearly has every confidence that he can extract the sort of valuation that Sir Bob talked about.

Watching Mr Green and his backers make his profits will inevitably be galling for Sears shareholders but those who had held the stock for years have only themselves to blame. Even after the fiasco of the Facia deal, they allowed Sir Bob to remain at the helm of the incredibly shrinking Sears ship.

If Sir Bernard Ashley had been removed from the scene sooner, Laura Ashley might not have been such a miserable tale. But he at least had the excuse of a huge shareholding to justify his interfering. His views on what has happened since are probably unprintable. Ditto the Malaysian investors who were persuaded to bail it out last time.

Heavy weather for insurance bidders

Guardian Royal Exchange's future should have been settled by now, eight weeks after the smallest of the independent composite insurers acknowledged that it was in play. But the haggling still goes on.

Three years ago, when Royal and Sun Alliance were pondering their merger, much of the industry was enjoying a healthy recovery in profit. Even a year ago, when Commercial Union and General Accident popped the question to each other, things were not too bad.

Margins on general insurance have now relapsed, along with most of the share prices, making it much harder to offer investors an attractive package. While other sectors boom, insurers never bounced back from the late summer post-Russia mini-crash. Even GRE, buoyed largely by bid hopes, trades a quarter below its 1998 high of 475p a share.

Sun Life and Provincial, backed by its ambitious French parent AXA, has seen its share price keep up but the early favourite seems disinclined to play a premium price for GRE and has been ruled out, along with other try-on bidders. That has left the field for Royal & SunAlliance, which ought to be prepared to pay more.

With a market value only half that of Allied Zürich, for example, RSA desperately needs to bulk itself up to have any chance of surviving as one of the big global insurance players. And there is a lot of overlap to maximise cost cutting. But RSA cannot afford a hostile bid for GRE.

After the high hopes of 1996, RSA rapidly lost friends by failing to sort out in advance the management of the merged group, resulting in the chiefs of both previous companies being stripped of power a year ago. Bob Mendelson, who was brought over from the US operation to speed up the £175 million a year of planned costs cuts, has yet to see the fruits of his labours.

At this tricky point, a strikingly timed circular from HSBC has bolstered lingering resistance in the GRE camp. HSBC urges institutional shareholders not to allow, themselves to be short-changed by a cheap bid or carve-up. It is aiming for 430p a share, valuing GRE at £3.8 billion, rather than the £3 billion some rejected suitors had in mind.

At that price, a bidder would have to add value to GRE's jewels, such as the PPP sickness insurer, rather than just wield the axe. Anyone who tries will have to do a lot of convincing lobbying in hostile City parlours.

The insurance market's saviour

Ron Sandler deserves a decent send-off when he departs from Lloyd's this summer. He may only have served four years but they were crucial years for the survival of the insurance market. Mr Sandler and Sir David Rowland rarely acknowledged just how close to extinction Lloyd's was, but they laboured mightily to achieve the settlements with the names and the new investment that would enable the market to survive.

South African Sandler might not have attracted the same headlines as his predecessor, the eccentric Peter Middleton, but he did get the job done. Mr Middleton, famous as the motor-bike riding former monk, made a hasty escape to Salomon Brothers but did not appear to settle there any more than he did at Lloyd's.

Mr Sandler's experience in sorting out Lloyd's might have made him the perfect catch for Barclays, still in search of a chief executive. He has probably been asked. But it seems that, like his predecessor, he is attracted to the world of investment banking, and is unlikely to have any trouble in landing the sort of globe-trotting role that will bring him a decent salary.

It will be intriguing to see whether he will want to venture some of his money on becoming a Lloyd's name. Sandler had little sympathy for those names who enjoyed the profits while they flowed but refused to pay up when fortune turned nasty. Lloyd's is now chasing them and, like Sandler, means business.

On-Line honesty

THE directors of On-Line clearly enjoy a joke. The chuckling was almost audible yesterday as they owned up to the fact that they are not really a whizzy, Internet-oriented business after all. Having sold some of their hugely overrated shares, they could afford a spot of honesty. But the spirit of openness is unlikely to be contagious. Investors need to tread warily as they try and pick Internet winners. Arcadia's £1 million of Internet sales amount to a promising start but not a whole new personality.

Bitter end near as Marston's rejects new Wolves' offer

By Dominic Walsh

MARSTON Thompson & Evershed yesterday rejected an increased offer from Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, setting the scene for what is expected to be a tight finale to this increasingly bitter battle.

Wolves raised its offer from 282p a share to 306.1p — valuing its prey at around £290 million — and raised the amount of cash it is offering to 230p compared to 182p under its original offer in November. The balance will be paid in shares.

However, Nick Letchet, Marston's chief executive, said the bid was "predicated on a flawed strategy that has consistently destroyed value and should be rejected". He pointed out that Wolves' revised estimate of cost savings — up from £12 million to £17 million — was still well short of the £24 million of synergy benefits promised by Marston's in its own £330 million counterbid for Wolves.

Most analysts expect the new offer from Wolves to be accepted, although some expressed disappointment at the level of the increase. One said: "I was hoping for around 315p a share, so this is far from a knockout bid. It looks as though it's going to be close, although my view is that Wolves should get it — just."

David Thompson, managing director of Wolves, said the revised offer was fair in that it represented a premium of 77 per cent over the Marston's share price prior to market speculation of a deal, and 54 per cent higher than the day before it finally launched its bid two months ago.



David Thompson, left, managing director of Wolverhampton & Dudley, with financial director Ralph Findlay

Mr Thompson dismissed Marston's so-called Pac-Man counterbid as "expensive" and "high-risk", adding: "It purports to address industry consolidation, but is in fact disintegration, downsizing and dilution."

He also cast doubt on its ability to deliver £24 million of cost savings without damaging the future prospects of the business.

He also launched a fierce attack on Mr Letchet for failing to follow a consistent strategy. He claimed that while the Marston's counterbid envisaged the retention of its Burton brewery, where it makes Pedigree bitter, this was "quite at odds with their recent offer to sell it to us". He said he had been offered the brewery twice over the past 12 months.

Marston's shareholders have until February 4 to decide whether to accept the raised offer. However, analysts expect Mr Letchet to respond by raising his own counterbid or, at the very least, to increase the cash element of the offer.

Tempus, page 28

Mobil's spending cut by $600m

Weak oil prices have forced Mobil to cut current-year spending plans by $600 million (£364 million), and the company has given warning that oil production will fall in 1999.

The US oil company, which has agreed an $80 billion merger with the rival Exxon, has pruned its project portfolio and given warning that its 1999 budget may be cut further if oil prices fail to improve.

Mobil said its 1999 capital budget would be $4.8 billion, down 11 per cent from last year. Drilling will continue in the new West of Shetlands area.

Mobil's warning coincided with better than expected earnings from Exxon. It suffered a 40 per cent fall in fourth-quarter net profits, to $1.5 billion, but earnings on a comparable basis were only 30 per cent down, less than the 50 per cent fall analysts forecast.

VAT ruling

Car leasing and trading companies had a setback in the European Court yesterday when the Advocate General backed UK Customs and Excise's rights to limit recovery of VAT on cars. Up to £15 billion would be at stake including back-dated claims by the companies. The court's final judgment, which usually follows the Advocate General's opinion, will be made later this year.

Cisco invests

Cisco Systems, the US technology giant, is making a £10 million investment in Scotland by unveiling a European research and development centre in Edinburgh, and starting its first European manufacturing in Livingston. The investment could create up to 160 jobs. The research centre is to develop software technology for world markets.

Krug for LVMH

LVMH, the French luxury goods group, has bought the Krug champagne business from the Rémy Cointreau drinks company for Fr1 billion (£107 million). LVMH products include Dom Perignon champagne and Louis Vuitton leather goods.

Bank's £19m buy

Brown Shipley, the merchant bank, is to buy Henry Cooke, the Ofex-traded investment manager, for £19.6 million. More than half of Cooke's shareholders have already accepted the deal.

Hamleys adds to retailer gloom with drop in sales

By Saeed Shah

DIFFICULT trading conditions in an increasingly competitive market made for a disappointing Christmas and new year period for Hamleys, Blacks Leisure and William Baird.

The toy retailer yesterday reported group sales 2.4 per cent down for the 24 weeks to January 16, sending the shares 11p lower to 132½p.

Hamleys said, however, that the decline in sales growth has been partially offset by the continued strengthening of margins. It said the flagship Regent Street store and Satellite operations showed "real strength" and sales were up 3.7 per cent on last year.

In the two weeks before Christmas, sales at the Regent Street store increased 12 per cent over the previous year.

The House of Toys concessions did not perform well, with sales down 14 per cent in the 24-week period.

William Baird, the clothing group, said sales for 1998 are expected to be 4 per cent lower than 1997, after flat sales in the first half. Profits for 1998 are expected to be slightly ahead at Baird's Brand business but behind in the division supplying Marks & Spencer.

The company said pre-tax profits for the year to December 31, 1998, are expected to be not less than £30 million. Last time, Baird made pre-tax profit of £31.1 million on turnover of £550.9 million.

Blacks Leisure Group, the retailer and distributor of sports clothing and equipment, reported that for the 20 weeks to January 16, 1999, like-for-like sales were down by 1 per cent overall. First Sport was down by 6 per cent, Blacks Outdoor ahead by 5 per cent and Active Venture was 23 per cent up.

In absolute terms, sales were 26 per cent up for the 20-week period. The company said its distribution businesses, Fila UK and O'Neill, are trading well ahead of the previous year.

Simon Bentley, chairman and chief executive, said he expected pre-tax profit for the year ending February 28, 1999, to be ahead of the £13.6 million achieved last time.

Shortage of phones alarming for JWE

By Chris Ayres

A SHORTAGE of pre-pay mobile phones over Christmas caused JWE Telecom, the Yorkshire mobile phone retailer and distributor, to issue a profit warning yesterday.

The shares fell 23 per cent to 163½p after it said it had sold just 16,000 handsets during December, 4,000 short of its target.

John Weatherill, JWE's chairman, said: "Reduced margins on pre-pay phones and the inability of supply to meet demand will result in profits growth being below that we had hoped to achieve.

"However, trading has been very strong and we are well positioned to take advantage of the growth predicted in the sector in the current year and beyond."

JWE has 50 retail outlets following its acquisition of Midland Phones.

For the six months to October 2, pre-tax profits grew by 5 per cent to £414,000, while sales rose 36 per cent to £12 million.

Earnings per share were 1.53p, down nearly 7 per cent from 1.64p. There is an interim dividend of 0.65p, the first since the company's float early last year.

Arcadia rebounds on news of 300 job cuts

ARCADIA, the clothing retail group, is cutting its head office staff by 300. The cuts at its West End headquarters come through 170 redundancies, with the rest resulting from a hiring freeze (Sarah Cunningham writes).

John Hoerner, chief executive, said the jobs being axed are "members of the management committee, all the way down". They will cost the company £3.5 million but should save it £8 million a year.

Mr Hoerner said that he had had it in mind to slim the organisation at some point, after the demerger from Debenhams last year. He had accelerated the operation in an effort to bring down costs. Arcadia's shares rebounded from their lows yesterday, rising 30½p to 167½p.



John Hoerner brought forward the cuts to reduce costs

Its shares plunged in December after a profits warning and as analysts became worried that the group's high fixed costs made it particularly vulnerable to a downturn in sales.

The group, which is behind the Dorothy Perkins, Top Shop, Top Man, Evans, Principles, Racing Green and Hawkshead brands, said yesterday that sales per square foot were down 1.9 per cent in the 20 weeks to January 16. Total sales, including new space, were up 0.3 per cent. Home shopping and Internet sales have fared better.

L&G among the top ten fund managers

By Richard Miles and Caroline Merrell

LEGAL & GENERAL has galloped into the top ten institutional fund managers by attracting more than £11 billion of new business to its index-tracking funds in 1998.

The composite insurer said yesterday that funds under management had grown to £77 billion (£57 billion) as trustees switched to "more consistent and cheaper products".

Mandates of £250 million or more accounted for a third of the new business, largely at the expense of Gartmore or Phillips & Drew. The growth helped Legal & General's total group assets to swell to £79 billion from £62 billion.

Worldwide sales of life and pension policies rose 21 per cent to £494 million. UK sales increased 16 per cent to £341 million. Single-premium business showed the most improvement, up 23 per cent in UK life and pensions to £1.4 billlion, continuing a decade-long trend away from regular premium payments. Single premium Pep payments jumped 31 per cent to £755 million.

But David Prosser, group chief executive, sounded a note of caution: "We wouldn't be immune from any fall in consumer confidence. But the fourth quarter held up pretty well. We have not seen any significant falling away in business."

New business at Zurich Financial Services rose 18 per cent last year, boosted by sales through independent financial advisers. ZFS, comprising Allied Dunbar, Eagle Star, Zurich and Threadneedle, the fund manager, is hoping this year to continue to increase its sales through IFAs. Brian Thomas, Zurich Financial Services finance director, said: "We are on record as saying that we are looking for an acquisition in this sector."

New premiums at the Allied Dunbar salesforce grew by 5 per cent to £240 million, while net new business through the IFA channel grew by 42 per cent to £155 million.

Threadneedle, which provides the fund management for the group's products and offers its services to third parties, attracted £439 million of UK single premium invesment funds.

Tempus, page 28

Bear necessity for ELC recovery

By Manus Costello

BARNEY the talking teddy bear came to the rescue of the Early Learning Centre over Christmas, it emerged yesterday.

John Menzies, the distribution company that owns ELC, said sales of the interactive bear, which can learn and repeat phrases, surpassed expectations, leaving ELC close to breaking even for the full year, after successive years of losses.

ELC sold 17,000 bears over Christmas at £100 each, contributing £1.7 million to sales which were up 15 per cent like-for-like in the four weeks before Christmas. Last year ELC posted a £6.7 million loss.

However, Menzies, which sold its newsagents to WH Smith last year, still plans to sell ELC in the near future to focus on its core business, distribution, and to continue the move into airport support services.

Menzies' pre-tax profits for the six months to October 31 rose to £3.2 million (£200,000) on a turnover of continuing operations at £602.7 million (£582.4 million). Earnings per share were 2.3p (loss of 1.2p) and the interim dividend remains at 4.8p a share.

The results were hit by a poor performance from THE Home Entertainment, the music, video and book distributor. The group has set aside an exceptional charge of £15 million in the second half to reorganise the subsidiary.

David Mackay, John Menzies chief executive, called the situation at THE "unacceptable". He said: "We got it badly wrong in the last year and the buck stops with me." He said group second-half profits were likely to be "much closer to last year's performance than they were in the first half".

Tempus, page 28





FRASER NELSON

FTSE falls as Net craze shows sign of demise

THE Internet gold rush showed its first sign of collapse yesterday on fears that the Wall Street craze for Net stocks is set to suffer an early death.

Dealers who had profited from selling to "99-ers" — private investors who appeared after the new year in search of Internet companies, said that sellers were emerging for the first time.

This combined with fresh fears about a Latin American economic crisis to send the FTSE 100 index down 83.3 points to 6,022.3 — with strategists expecting another dip below the 6,000 level today.

Jitters were traced back to Barton Biggs, the influential chairman of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter Investments. He told a Tokyo conference that Argentina could be next for a crash, pulling Wall Street and London down after it.

This was credited with a 37½p fall in **Unilever**, down to 612½p and **Reckitt & Coleman**, 25½p cheaper at 715p.

He also said that investors with little knowledge of finance were creating the Internet "bubble" which would soon burst.

His words were eagerly followed by London dealers waiting for the first signs that the Internet craze will implode.

Suddenly, having an Internet-sounding name was no longer enough. The dramatic fall of **On-Line**, off 53 per cent at 129p, was followed by **Virtual.net**, off 107½p to 205p. **Voss Net**, down 22p to 57½p and **Netcall**, 18p cheaper at 67p.

These are all AIM-listed companies, and dealers on the junior exchange say they have never been so busy.

One said: "It was all private clients who've seen their money doubled every day. It was getting silly — Netcall is a telecoms company, but its name suggests otherwise so up it goes."

The profit-taking also claimed victims amongst the FTSE 250 camp and **WH Smith**, seen by optimists as the next Amazon.com, fell 7 per cent to 571p.

Its shares have been in orbit since it agreed to buy AIM-listed **Helicon Publishing**, steady at 100p, becoming Britain's largest Internet bookseller.

Dixons, which connects 900,000 subscribers to the Internet for free, was also losing the covered status of quasi-Internet stock — falling 29p to 030½p.

Smaller companies left out by the first phase of the Internet frenzy — usually those who make profits — continued to rank amongst the fastest-climbing small companies yesterday.

Intelligent Environments was the fastest riser, 32 per cent better at 90p. **Epic Group**, which produces CD-Roms, was 4p better at 23p.

Internet Technology was 21 per cent higher at 172p and rival **Easynet** rose 36½p to 280p. They both connect users to the Internet, and their shares had suffered on fears that the likes of Dixons would steal their market by offering free access.

Recognition Systems shot up 26 per cent — but it is a penny share and the advance was 4¼p to 20½p. Much of the high-percentage gains on recent weeks have come from AIM's main selling point: the smaller they come, the faster they rise.

This has certainly worked for **Arcadia**, up 30½p at 167p on relief that it had no nasty surprises in its Christmas trading statement. In theory, this is its best day yet on the stock market even though the 22 per cent rise takes the shares back to December levels.

No such luck for **Alldays**, the convenience store chain off another 25p at 67½p. The fear is now that the "cashflow problems" it alluded to in its trading statement could mean breach of the banking covenants.

Bear raiders who did so well out of **Booker**, off another penny to a new low of 46p, are seeing Alldays as a chance to relive their success.

The two companies both have the same problem — not so much sales, but sorting out the distribution between warehouse and shop.

After having agreed a £17 billion merger, **GEC** does not look particularly vulnerable, adding 4p to 529½p. But John Mayo, its finance director, said yesterday he had spent £262,000 of his own money buying another 50,000 shares at 524½p apiece.

The recent rumblings over **First Leisure**, tipped as a takeover target for Luminar, took a new turn yesterday on rumour that the deal may be constructed the other way round.

Industry sources believe Michael Grade, the cigar-chomping chief executive of First Leisure, and Stephen Thomas, his counterpart at Luminar, are contemplating a merger that could be couched as a nil-premium deal.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** The British Chamber of Commerce survey made for a cheery day in the futures pit, confirming tough conditions for the service sector. Treasury 10 per cent 2001 added five ticks to 110²⁵⁄₃₂. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was up £0.94 to £155.66.

☐ **NEW YORK:** After falling at the opening of trade as Brazilian stocks plunged, shares saw some recovery in late morning trade. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 8.49 points at 9,327.42.



John Mayo, finance director, spent £262,000 of his own money buying GEC stock. The shares rose 4p yesterday

BIG FISH IN SMALL POND

FTSE all-share index (rebased) · FTSE AIM index · 750–1,200 · Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan · Source: Datastream

IT HAS been a phenomenal fortnight for the Alternative Investment Market. Since Monday last week, seven of London's ten best risers have been listed on the junior exchange.

But to look at the FTSE AIM index, you would think nothing had happened.

Size is the problem. The index is weighted — so the fortunes of the hundres of smaller companies are ironed out by nudges in the dozen stocks capitalised at over £100 million.

On-Line's 2,080 per cent rise would dent the FTSE AIM index by the same amount as a 3.7 per cent fall in Carlisle Holdings, its largest stock.

AIM has its bowlers, and its members usually fill the worst faller tables as well.

But the likes of Virtualinternet, Infobank and Netcall demonstrate the kind of casino-like returns that only AIM is capable of generating — and are a reminder of why there is much more to the market than suggested by its index.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9327.42 (−8.49)
S&P Composite	1246.23 (−10.39)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	14245.42 (+217.37)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10048.57 (−268.34)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	543.79 (−9.39)
Sydney:	
AO	2852.0 (−20.7)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	5156.67 (+13.61)
Singapore:	
Straits	1504.06 (−44.21)
Brussels:	
BEL20	3441.63 (−49.50)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4154.03 (−35.98)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	1430.30 (−22.00)
London:	
FT 30	3492.2 (−22.0)
FTSE 100	6022.3 (−83.3)
FTSE 250	4875.6 (−9.1)
FTSE 350	2830.0 (−34.2)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2793.23 (−38.41)
FTSE All-Share	2729.03 (−31.54)
FTSE Non Financials	2787.54 (−30.63)
FTSE Fixed Interest	158.07 (+0.57)
FTSE Govt Secs	116.94 (+0.55)
Bargains	81322
SEAQ Volume	1266.0m
US$	1.6518 (+0.0041)
Euro	0.7013 (−0.0009)
Exchange Index	99.6 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
RPI	164.4 Dec (2.8%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	162.4 Dec (2.6%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

AIM VCT	100		...
Abbey Natl Dublin Inv	93		...
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	97½		...
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	120	−	½
Five Arrs Uts Cv Ln 2040	105¼	−	1½
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	108¾		...
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	96½	+	¼
Singer & Frd AIM VCT	100		...
Virtual Internet	205		−107½
Willington	77½		...
Yeoman II Equity Units	99½	+	½
Yeoman II Inv Tst Cap	5¼		...
Yeoman II Inv Tst Inc	95¾	+	½
Yeoman II Zero Div Pf	116¼	+	¾

RIGHTS ISSUES

EMAP n/p (875)	247½	+	34½
Recognition Systems n/p (9)	11¾	+	4¾

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Intelligent Env	90	+ 22	+ 32.3
Arcadia Group	167½	+ 30½	+ 22.2
Internet Tech	172	+ 30½	+ 21.5
Phonelink	47½	+ 8	+ 20.2
Nsb Retail Sys	195	+ 30	+ 18.1
Business Post	637½	+ 95	+ 17.5
Inn Business	47	+ 7	+ 17.5
TransTec	33½	+ 4½	+ 15.5
Cairn Energy	71½	+ 9½	+ 15.3
Easynet	280	+ 36½	+ 14.9
IOC Intl	47½	+ 6	+ 14.4
Tempus Gp	206½	+ 21½	+ 11.6

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Alldays	67½	− 25	− 27.0
JWE Telecom	162½	− 51	− 23.8
Silvermines	27½	− 7	− 20.2
WF Elect	677½	−118½	− 14.8
Paladin Res	22½	− 3½	− 13.4
Partners	26½	− 3½	− 11.6
Andrews Sykes	127½	− 15	− 10.5
Sothebys	2150	−237½	− 9.9
Lon Forfaiting	102½	− 11	− 9.6
Adscene	148½	− 15	− 9.1
Alpha Airpts	39½	− 3½	− 8.1
Forminster	46½	− 4	− 7.9
Clarke T	121½	− 10	− 7.6
Cohen (A)	125	− 10	− 7.4
TeleWest	244	− 19	− 7.2
Zergo	712½	− 55	− 7.1
Hse of Fraser	86	− 6½	− 7.0
Adam & Harvey	132½	− 10	− 7.0
Smith WH	571	− 43	− 7.0

Wolves on target

YESTERDAY'S raised offer for Marston Thompson & Evershed from Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries is by no means a knock-out, being some 10p lighter than many had hoped. But the increased cash element, and the fact that the offer is now at a 77 per cent premium over the pre-bid Marston's price, underpin a persuasive Wolves argument.

The main difference between the two sides — apart from a not insurmountable disparity over predicted cost savings — is over the future of tenanted pubs versus managed houses. Marston's wants to offload tenancies and close Wolves' breweries to focus on high street concepts such as Pitcher & Piano. Wolves, on the other hand, worships at the altar of vertical integration. Wolves is one of the most efficient beermakers in the industry and for a regional — as the combined entity will remain — integration is appropriate. Shareholders can also vest greater confidence in Wolves' management. Nick Letcher and Mike Thompson of Marston's attract well-placed praise for their securitisation gambit and the Pac-Man defence proposals, but the fact remains that they have not been in place long enough to prove themselves. Without that background, their schemes smack of too-clever-by-half financial engineering.

Meanwhile, David Thompson of Wolves has a wealth of brewing experience, having previously worked at Whitbread. He is widely recognised as a solid operator by his peers, and has put forward an eloquent and well-reasoned case in support of his bid for Marston's.

The result will be close. But unless Marston's comes back the Wolves offer is the better one and should be accepted.

Allied Zurich

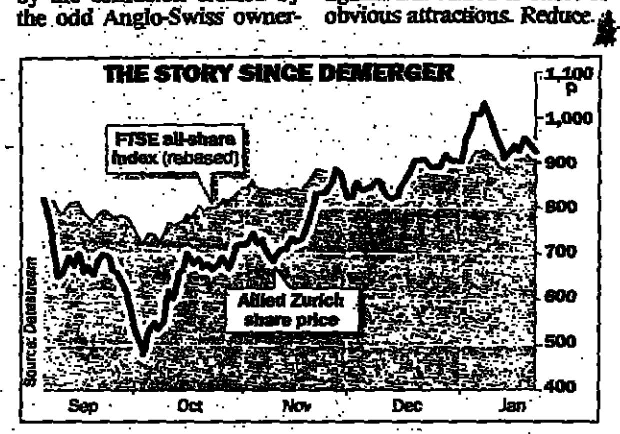
SIX MONTHS ago, before the demerger of BAT Industries, it was an odds-on bet that the share price performance of the financial services company would leave the tobacco side in the shade. Events, however, have shown Allied Zurich scrambling to keep up with the market average, while the price of new British American Tobacco shares has soared.

New business figures from Zurich Financial Services, from which Allied Zurich derives its income and which it jointly owns with the Swiss firm confusingly called Zurich Allied, did nothing to change the picture. London listed Allied Zurich shares fell 20.5p — or 2.1 per cent — despite ZFS's 18 per cent rise in new business premiums.

Allied shares have caught the cold that has left many insurance stocks meandering. In life and pensions fears are that sales will suffer from the slowing economic environment, and that profit margins will be squeezed by greater competition. Allied has big exposure to much less favoured general insurance.

The company is not helped by the confusion created by the odd Anglo-Swiss ownership structure. The departure of star fund manager Paul Manduca last week may also contribute to the negative sentiment.

Now new BAT is feeling renewed tobacco litigation heat, the topsy-turvy world inhabited by these most unidentical twins may change again. But Allied is short of obvious attractions. Reduce.



Legal & General

LEGAL & GENERAL shares are, like Allied Zurich's, unattractive, although for rather different reasons. At 846p, up another 18p yesterday, the stock is at an all-time high. Moreover, the shares trade at a multiple of 40 times expected 1998 earnings per share.

L&G may be a juicy takeover target, but even these — doubtful — hopes do not justify the stratospheric rating. Nor does L&G's power as an index-tracking fund manager. Nor does L&G's ability to capitalise on telephone direct sales channels while using independent and tied agent adviser networks effectively.

David Prosser, chief executive, held up yesterday's new business figures as proof that L&G has no need of a partner. At this price, it is barely imaginable it could get one.

And if one strips out personal equity plans — which are coming to an end this April — L&G's core 1998 UK revenues rose by 13 per cent. Regular premium business, generally seen as better-quality earnings than single premiums because they tend to stay on the books longer, grew by just under 12 per cent. This is better than competitors, but a far cry from the early and mid Nineties when life companies consistently reported 20, 30 per cent and even 40 per cent increases in regular premium contracts. Not only that, but the price-cutting march that L&G stole on competitors to win above-average sales growth in the recent past is increasingly threatened as rivals retaliate. Take profits.

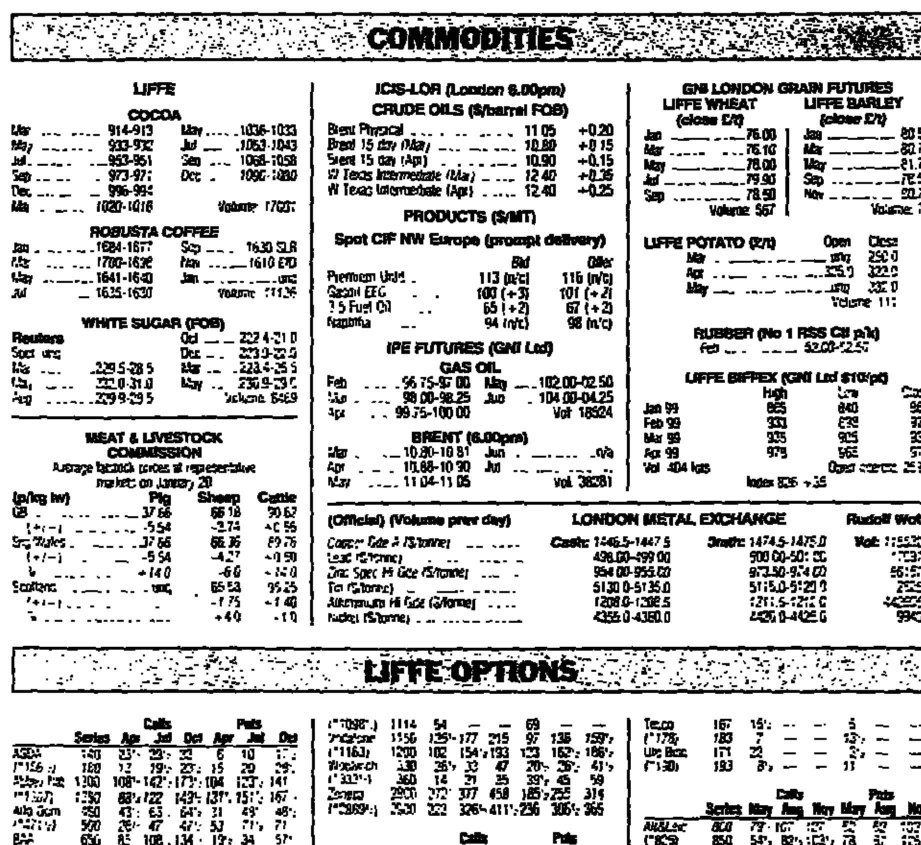
John Menzies

JOHN MENZIES was in steady decline until David Mackay took over 18 months ago, and its shares surged on hopes that his bold move away from newsagents would pay off. Those hopes were somewhat dampened in summer, however, as the mess in THE Home Entertainment became clear. Now margins in the newspaper distribution business are falling.

The direction in which the group is heading is more secure, however. Newspaper distribution margins fell only because longer-term contracts have been signed, and the business is a good cash generator. Growth can come from Menzies's second string, airport cargo handling. The EU is trying to break up the market, which it sees as monopolistic, and Menzies Transport Services is well placed to take advantage, having already entered into a joint venture with the largest cargo carrier in the world, Lufthansa.

If the management can overcome the THE and Early Learning Centre situations, the shares should progress. Moreover, there are funds available to acquire. But buyers need forsight.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFFE — COCOA

Mar	914-913	May	1036-1033
May	933-932	Jul	1053-1043
Jul	953-951	Sep	1068-1058
Sep	973-971	Dec	1090-1080
Dec	996-994		
Mar	1020-1016		Volume: 17001

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Jan	1684-1677	Sep	1630 SLR
Mar	1700-1698	Nov	1610 ETD
May	1641-1640	Jan	unq
Jul	1635-1630		Volume: 11136

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	224.4-21.0
Spot	unq	Dec	223.0-22.0
Mar	229.5-28.5	Mar	223.4-25.5
May	232.0-31.0	May	230.9-23.0
Aug	229.9-29.5		Volume: 6469

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION
Average fatstock prices at representative markets on January 20

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	37.66	66.18	90.67
(+/−)	−5.54	−2.74	+0.56
Eng/Wales	37.66	66.36	89.76
(+/−)	−5.54	−4.27	+0.50
%	+14.0	−6.6	−14.0
Scotland	unq	65.53	95.25
(+/−)		−1.75	−1.40
%		+4.0	−1.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) — CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	11.05	+0.20
Brent 15 day (Mar)	10.80	+0.15
Brent 15 day (Apr)	10.90	+0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	12.40	+0.35
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	12.40	+0.25

PRODUCTS ($/MT) — Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	113 (n/c)	116 (n/c)
Gasoil EEC	100 (+3)	101 (+2)
3.5 Fuel Oil	65 (+2)	67 (+2)
Naphtha	94 (n/c)	98 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd) — GAS OIL

Feb	96.75-97.00	May	102.00-02.50
Mar	98.00-98.25	Jun	104.00-04.25
Apr	99.75-100.00		Vol: 18524

BRENT (6.00pm)

Mar	10.80-10.81	Jun	n/a
Apr	10.88-10.90	Jul	...
May	11.04-11.05		Vol: 38281

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	76.00	Jan	80.50
Mar	76.10	Mar	80.73
May	78.00	May	81.75
Jul	79.90	Sep	76.52
Sep	78.50	Nov	80.75
Volume: 567		Volume: 70	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	250.0
Apr	325.0	322.0
May	unq	332.0
		Volume: 111

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
Feb 52.00-52.50

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Jan 99	865	840	860
Feb 99	931	835	920
Mar 99	935	905	930
Apr 99	979	965	975
Vol: 404 lots			Open interest: 2530

Index 836 +35

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (Official) (Volume prev day) — Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1446.5-1447.5	1474.5-1475.0	1155205
Lead ($/tonne)	498.00-499.00	500.00-501.00	77375
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	954.00-955.00	973.50-974.00	661575
Tin ($/tonne)	5130.0-5135.0	5115.0-5120.0	22255
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1208.0-1208.5	1211.5-1212.0	442250
Nickel ($/tonne)	4355.0-4360.0	4420.0-4425.0	99452

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 99	119.65	120.16	119.57	120.08	43380
Previous open interest 109142	Jun 99				120.78	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				117.41	0
Previous open interest 0						
Five Year Gilt	Mar 99				109.13	0
Previous open interest 63	Jun 99				109.13	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	115.01	115.28	114.94	115.18	8632
Previous open interest 43597						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	130.32	130.32	129.90	129.97	2865
	Jun 99				129.07	0
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.480	94.520	94.470	94.500	22299
	Jun 99	94.840	94.870	94.830	94.850	18073
Previous open interest 1121798	Sep 99	95.040	95.070	95.030	95.050	14894
Three Mth Euromark	Apr 99				97.060	0
Previous open interest 1894878	Jun 99	97.120	97.165	97.120	97.140	53109
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 99	97.010	97.040	97.010	97.020	3004
Previous open interest 475725	Jun 99	97.160	97.170	97.140	97.140	2645
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.630	98.700	98.630	98.670	21132
Previous open interest 176983	Jun 99	98.570	98.608	98.510	98.560	9353
Three Mth Euro	Apr 99				97.060	0
Previous open interest 11295	Jun 99				97.140	0
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6110.0	6185.0	6017.0	6029.0	29034
Previous open interest 187366	Jun 99	6166.0	6166.0	6083.5	6069.5	500

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance House 7
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6¼ Low 5¼ Week fixed: 5⅝
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5⅝; 3 mth 5⅝. Sell: 2 mth 5½; 3 mth 5½

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5¼	
Sterling Money Rates:	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝	5⅝-5½	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5¼
Interbank:	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝	5⅝-5½	5½-5⅜	5⅜-5¼
Overnight: open 5¾, close 5½					
Local Authority Deps:	4¾-4⅝	n/a	5⅝-5½	n/a	—
Sterling CDs:	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝	5⅝-5½	5½-5⅜	5¼-5⅛
Dollar CDs:	4.88	n/a	4.87	4.89	5.04
Building Society CDs:	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝	5⅝-5½	5½-5⅜	5¼-5⅛

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	4⅞-4¾	4⅞-4¾	5-4⅞	5⅛-4⅞	5½-4½
Sterling:	6⅛-6	5⅞-5¾	5½-5⅜	5¼-5⅛	5½-5¼
Euro:	3⅛-2⅞	3⅛-2⅞	3-2⅞	3-2⅞	3ds-3pr
Yen:	⅜-¼	⅜-¼	⅜-¼	⅝-⅜	1-par
Canada:	4⅞-4¾	4⅞-4¾	4⅞-4¾	4⅞-4¾	5¼-4½

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $287.40-287.70 **Close:** $287.90-288.40 **High:** $288.00-288.50 **Low:** $287.10-287.60 **AM:** $287.10 **PM:** $287.75

Krugerrand: $289.00-291.00 (£174.50-176.50)

Platinum: $353.50 (£214.10) **Silver:** $5.175 (£3.125) **Palladium:** $320.50 (£194.10)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for January 21	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.564-10.611	10.597-10.611	¼-⅛pr	⅝-⅜pr
Euro	1.4251-1.4271	1.4255-1.4267	0.15-0.18ds	0.44-0.47ds
Montreal	2.4916-2.5098	2.5035-2.5065	0.20-0.13pr	0.42-0.28pr
New York	1.6440-1.6540	1.6514-1.6523	0.14-0.12pr	0.29-0.26pr
Oslo	12.233-12.293	12.269-12.293	¼-3/9ds	½-¾ds
Stockholm	12.704-12.789	12.768-12.789	⅛-¼pr	¼-⅛pr
Tokyo	184.96-187.10	186.88-187.10	1-⅞pr	2½-2⅜pr
Zurich	2.2782-2.2894	2.2869-2.2894	1-⅞pr	2½-2⅜pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

Australia	1.5586-1.5598
Canada	1.5166-1.5176
Denmark	6.4065-6.4115
Euro	1.1605-1.1609
Hong Kong	7.7480-7.7485
Japan	112.85-112.89
Malaysia	3.7999-3.8001
Norway	7.4270-7.4370
Singapore	1.6710-1.6725
Sweden	7.7295-7.7345
Switzerland	1.3802-1.3812

Argentina peso*	1.6508-1.6531
Australia dollar	2.5725-2.5755
Bahrain dinar	0.6140-0.6282
Brazil real*	1.9915-1.9940
Cyprus pound	0.8185-0.8373
Euro	1.4250-1.4272
Finland markka	8.3925-8.5319
Greece drachma	454.00-464.50
Hong Kong dollar	12.8059-12.8121
India rupee	69.22-70.82
Indonesia rupiah	14102.0-14402.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4915-0.5029
Malaysia ringgit	6.2805-6.2846
New Zealand dollar	3.0438-3.0513
Pakistan rupee	80.10 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9275-6.0649
Singapore dollar	2.7615-2.7656
S Africa rand (com)	9.8160-10.0348
U A E dirham	5.9800-6.1186

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

3i	900	Legal & Gn	2,193
ASDA Gp	57,952	Lloyds TSB	10,205
Abbey Nat	2,580	LucasVarity	2,998
Allnce & Leic	1,128	Marks Spr	15,201
Allied Dom	5,767	Nat Grid	13,204
Allied Zrch	4,367	Nat Power	5,528
Amvescap	4,593	NatWst Bk	8,228
AB Foods	1,063	Norwich Un	6,430
Bk of Scot	3,149	Orange	5,891
BAA	2,495	P & O	2,201
Barclays	6,645	Pearson	1,666
Bass	3,222	PowerGen	1,103
BG	7,602	Prudential	10,253
Billiton	10,664	Railtrack	1,605
BOC	1,073	Reckitt Col	1,504
Boots	3,305	Reed Intl	5,252
BP Amoco	22,704	Rentokil	6,780
BAe	8,888	Reuters	10,152
BA	8,482	Rio Tinto	2,720
Brit Am Tob	8,725	Rolls Royce	4,233
Brit Energy	2,714	Ryl & Sun	8,511
BSkyB	6,324	Ryl Bk Scot	2,557
BT	15,176	Safeway	2,262
BTR	6,288	Sainsbury	4,053
CGU	3,956	Schroders	120
COLT Telecom	1,383	Scot & New	4,080
Cable Wire	8,203	Scot Sthn Engy	2,087
Cadbury	4,894	Scot Power	4,896
Carlton Cms	5,214	Securicor	1,917
Centrica	10,796	Sears Trust	709
Compass Gp	4,635	Shell Trans	19,933
Diageo	11,190	Siebe	7,350
Dixons Grp	4,495	Smiths Ind	4,191
EMI	4,564	SmKl Bch	31,149
Gallaher	524	Stagecoach	2,138
Gen Elec	15,086	Std Chartd	7,133
GKN	3,218	Sun Life	449
Glaxo Well	8,206	TeleWest	10,649
Granada	2,727	Tesco	17,549
GUS	11,689	Thames W	1,399
GRE	4,583	Tomkins	12,100
Hanson	1,421	Unilever	12,637
ICI	2,685	Utd News	2,900
Imperial Tob	1,626	Utd Utilities	4,990
HSBC	8,994	Vodafone	28,526
Halifax	4,958	WPP	18,238
Hays	2,635	Whitbread	1,029
Kingfisher	3,864	Williams	1,010
Ladbroke	6,708	Woolwich	6,076
Land Secs	2,362	Zeneca	3,236

	Jan 21 midday	Jan 20 close
	[illegible]	[illegible]

Costly drugs and mobile phones offer no cure for faltering market

Paul Durman says price still matters for 'future stocks' behind the asset bubble

Here is a favourite fact from Phillips & Drew, the bearish fund manager. If every man, woman and child in the UK had a mobile phone, and all of them made £250 of calls a year, the industry's total revenue would still be only a third of the stock market value of the UK's mobile phone companies.

This back-of-the-envelope calculation was done before Vodafone's £40 billion takeover offer for AirTouch of the US drove the telecom sector's share prices to even more extreme levels.

Vodafone's share price is two and a half times what it was at the start of last year, and, at £35 billion, the company is now worth more than ten times this year's sales and about 50 times its forecast profits.

Orange, yet to make a profit, has quadrupled in value and is now worth £11 billion. BT is still dominated by traditional telephony but even it has seen its share price double.

Most extraordinary of all is the rise and rise of COLT Telecom. COLT's sales last year will have barely reached £350 million but it is already in the top half of the FTSE100 and is valued at £7.9 billion — more than big, long-established companies such as Bass, Safeway and Alliance & Leicester.

COLT has prompted many investors and commentators to wonder whether the market has taken leave of its senses, but still the onward rush continues. Investor enthusiasm does extend beyond the telecoms sector but only as far as pharmaceuticals and (less importantly) Internet-related stocks — which, bizarrely, has turned out to mean previously unloved retailers such as Dixons and WH Smith.

The investment logic is that in a low-inflation world struggling with recession in Asian and other emerging economies, investors are desperate to find "growth stocks", whose businesses will prosper in a downturn. And telecoms, healthcare and the Internet form a Holy Trinity of industries with unquestionable growth potential.

Even though telecom groups are battling with rapid technological change, pharmaceutical companies are facing patent expiries and fierce pricing pressures, and Internet firms have yet to figure out how to make a profit, it seems no price is too high for these hallowed stocks. Price/earnings ratios (when there are earnings on which to calculate them) have soared far above historical norms.

Rob Waugh, assistant director at Phillips & Drew, said: "We are watching this market with disbelief."

P&D's clients have suffered because of the firm's cautious stance on the market in recent years. With big stakes in BTR, Coats Viyella and Sears, it is accused of buying the history of the stock market rather than its future. Nonetheless, the P&D analysis — shared in part by many leading active managers — continues to pose difficult questions for telecoms fans.

The exceptional performance of a handful of very big companies is distorting what is going on in the UK stock market. Since the Russian economic crisis spilt over into Western financial markets last August, the FTSE 100 has climbed back to almost record levels.

However, Phillips & Drew argues, this is almost entirely due to the unjustified rise in the price of the largest companies. Much of the FTSE 100 is actually trading sideways or even in a bear market.

This can be seen from figure 1. It shows that the FTSE 100's outperformance of the wider stock market during 1997 and 1998 was almost entirely due to the ten largest companies. The rest of the index barely kept pace. The escalating value of the big ten is scarcely explained by their profits performance. Table 2 suggests the largest companies will, on average, report a 6 per cent decline in profits for their latest financial year, largely because of the collapsing oil price and Glaxo Wellcome's loss of Zantac sales.

Glaxo's profits are predicted to bounce back strongly this year because of a series of new drugs. But does this justify the 150 per cent rise in the share price since the start of 1997?

Its p/e ratio relative to the FTSE All-share index — a measure of its expensiveness compared with the rest of the stock market — doubled to about 1.5 between 1994 and the start of 1998. But since then it has soared even further, recently peaking at 2.75. The stampede of the giant companies is being driven by sheer weight of money. In part this comes from the US: investment managers awash with mutual fund cash are turning to Europe. Many are restricting their buying to the largest 200 or so companies.

More important still is the growing influence of indexation. More and more investors are buying shares in the biggest companies simply because they are the biggest companies. This can be self-perpetuating: as Vodafone and COLT rise through the ranks of the FTSE 100, they attract an ever greater weight of funds.

This phenomenon extends well beyond true index funds. Actively managed pension funds, tired of underperforming, have moved closer and closer to an index weighting.

An analysis by Schroder Securities showed pension funds were significantly underweight in the big four sectors of oil, drugs, telecoms and banks at the end of 1996. But since then, closet indexing has prompted pension funds to increase their weighting in these sectors from 87 to 96 per cent.

Mr Waugh said: "Everyone's been hit too hard. Nobody can afford to take [their own] positions any more. They are saying: 'We can't take the pain. Let's just buy the bloody things.'"

Part of the problem is the cult of equity. Investors are so comfortable with the idea of better returns from stock market investment that they find it hard to imagine how they might lose by investing money in a great company such as Glaxo Wellcome. Yes, the shares may fall in the short term, but in the long run shares will always outperform other investments, won't they? Price becomes almost an irrelevance.

Table 1 shows how badly flawed this thinking has proved in the past. It shows the performance over seven years of ten well-known members of the Nifty 50 — the great US corporations that turned in barnstorming performances in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Companies such as McDonalds, Disney and IBM continued to produce respectable profits growth. Yet the share prices of these (and all the other examples) declined as the stock market underwent a massive de-rating. The p/e ratios of the Nifty 50 fell by almost 80 per cent.

Mobile phones and the Internet are exciting opportunities, but stock markets have seen many new technologies in the past — and have frequently overvalued them. Figure 2 shows the tremendous growth in JVC's share price that attended the arrival of the video cassette recorder. But while VCR sales continued to grow, JVC's share price went into reverse as competition drove down returns. Can Vodafone really retain its huge margins, or is it facing the same fate?

Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, whose reading of financial markets is almost universally applauded, sounds regular warnings about stock market levels. This week he said the high level of US share prices "would appear to envision substantially greater growth of profits than has been experienced of late". Despite shrinking profit forecasts and the economic problems in Brazil and elsewhere, the markets in the US and UK have repeatedly brushed off such cautions. UK stocks were this week trading at a record multiple of profits.

Meanwhile, markets continue to display behaviour which, if not irrational, is certainly highly peculiar. The startling rises of any company that can claim a link with the Internet is the most obvious example.

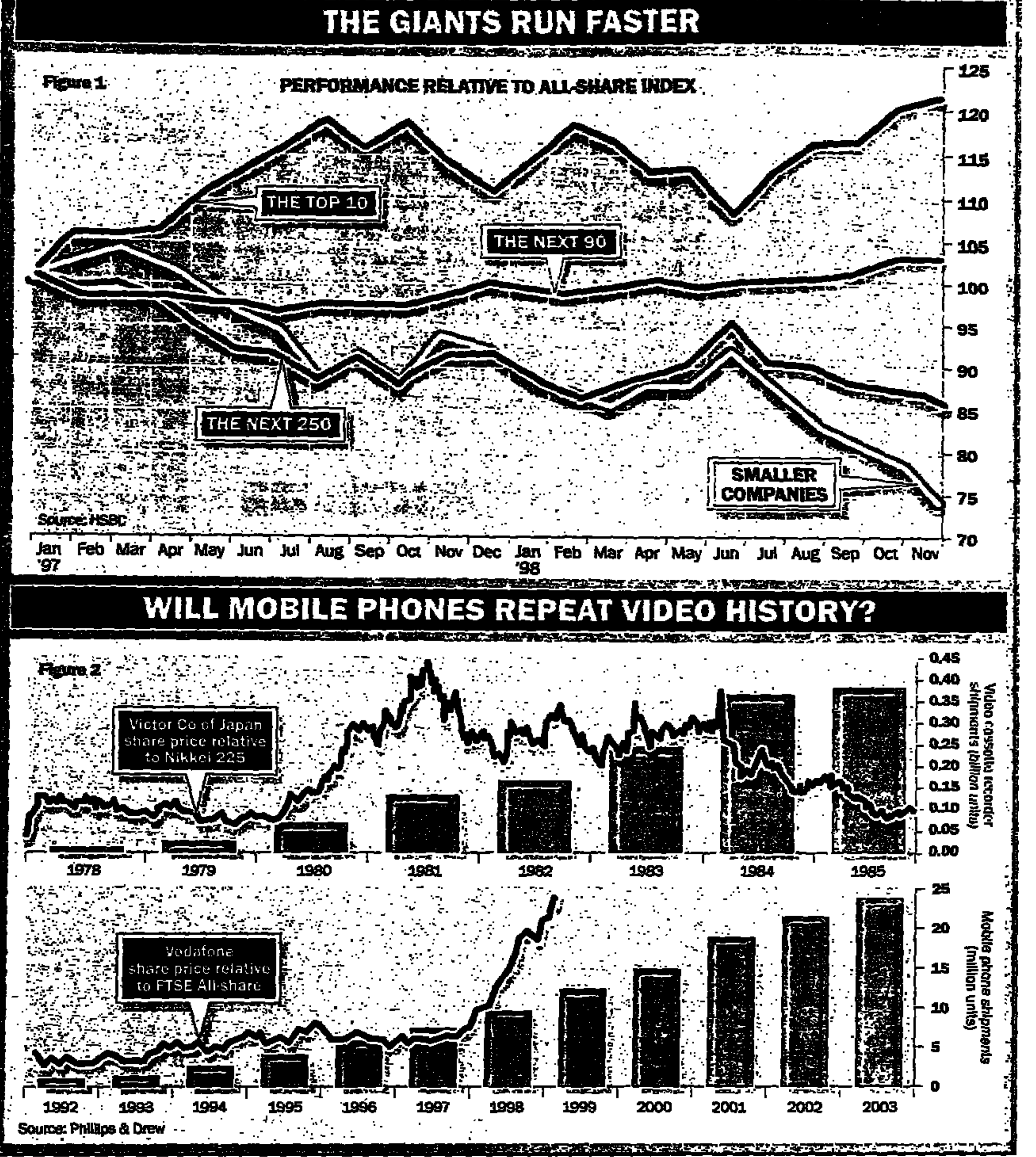
Daily market movements of more than 100 points have become routine as price volatility has risen sharply. For the bears, these are danger signals.

Even those who sympathise with this analysis find it hard to imagine what will bring the bull run to an end — particularly because of the weight of money pouring into the markets from US retail savings. The markets have shrugged off the October 1997 scare, Russia, Long Term Capital Management and now Brazil.

Phillips & Drew argues that the support from the "weight of money" is illusory. It really indicates a preference for people to hold liquid assets. The US savings ratio has dropped so low it has turned negative — surely an unsustainable position.

Most investors find it hard to conceive that the market might fall by more than 10 or perhaps 20 per cent. After all, the economic outlook in many Western economies remains relatively sanguine.

However, with the largest companies trading at such racy prices, the risk is that when the bubble bursts the ensuing crash will be similarly extravagant. The US economy looks almost invulnerable — just like Japan ten years ago.



TEN FROM THE US NIFTY FIFTY...

TABLE 1	December 31, 1972 PRICE	EPS	P/E	October 31, 1979 PRICE	EPS	P/E	CAGR*
Citicorp	38	1.7	22	21	3.9	5	12.6%
Coca-Cola	75	1.6	48	34	3.2	11	10.4%
Disney	106	1.3	82	37	3.4	11	14.8%
General Electric	73	2.8	26	48	5.9	8	11.3%
IBM	80	2.2	37	62	5.4	11	13.7%
Johnson & Johnson	130	2.1	62	68	5.3	13	14.1%
McDonalds	76	0.9	85	44	4.3	10	25.0%
Polaroid	126	1.4	91	24	3.3	7	13.1%
Sears, Roebuck	58	1.9	31	18	2.8	6	5.7%
Xerox	149	3.1	49	59	6.4	9	10.9%
[illegible]	99	1.49	48.65	40	3.82	10.3	14.5%

*Compound annual growth rate

...AND THE UK TOP TEN

TABLE 2	% profit change year to Dec '98	PE ratio Dec '98
BP	-25	25
Glaxo	-7	46
BT (to March '99)	-8	30
Lloyds TSB	5	21
HSBC	-13	16
SmithKline	8	44
Shell	-25	25
Vodafone (to March '99)	32	60
Diageo	1	21
Zeneca	-3	37
AVERAGE	-6	28

Source: HSBC/Phillips & Drew

BUSINESS LETTERS

Imperative that US sets example on free trade

From Mr L. Rampersaud

Sir, The article published on January 13, 1999, titled "US facing trade war with Japan and Europe" illustrates America's "true" commitment to free trade. It reinforces the view that the GATT and indeed its son, the WTO, was only set up for the gains of its designers.

Indeed, while the US was unchallenged as an economic power, it sought to open international markets for its exports; when its economic strength, at least in relative terms, started to shrink it was less keen. This is precisely what can be seen from Charlene Barshefsky's mercantalistic view on Japanese steel imports.

From a country that is meant to be committed to free trade, we are seeing escalating protectionism and strong reminders of the 1980s when charges of dumping were the protectionist's weapon of choice and nearly 80 per cent of all actions brought against foreign competitors were anti-dumping cases. The Uruguay Round neglected this issue because the negotiators with the most muscle, the US and what was then the EC, broadly agreed to make the anti-dumping code in GATT more effective. We should be wary of terms like "more effective" which under closer inspection actually mean "more protectionist". It is important that the fundamental basis for trade must not be lost sight of: that it is relatively cheaper to produce goods in some countries than others.

The real task for the future of trade talks is how it should deal with the emergence of regionalism. If we are to avoid regional trade wars dominated by the US, Japan and Europe, the leading governments in our world economy should not stray from the liberalist principles of the trade talks.

The weakening of the multilateral approach has been gradual and by neglect, through the accumulation of ad hoc decisions to protect specific sectors. These departures from the original design of free trade agreements have created a period of instability and uncertainty in international trade relations. It is essential for the US to set an example as indeed your City Editor points out on January 13: "the open trading system depends on that American commitment."

Yours faithfully,
Luke Rampersaud,
79 Cliffsea Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea,
Essex SS9 1NG.

Benefits of working time directive

From Mr Ian McCartney, Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry

Sir, The Working Time Directive (Commentary, January 8 and 9) gives the basic rights to workers that most people take for granted, but which have been denied to far too many for far too long.

Many agency workers work part time in order to balance work and family life. They need regular rest breaks and paid leave just as much as anyone else. That is why the Government has included them in the scope of the Working Time Directive.

Agencies already keep a note of their workers' hours. The only extra requirement is to ensure that staff do not work more than 48 hours a week on average without them agreeing in advance to do so. And providing paid leave on a pro rata basis in no way should need a doubling of charges. The best companies provide paid leave, rest breaks and a sensible working week because they recognise that people need time away from the workplace.

Workers in other European countries benefit from the Working Time Directive. Its introduction into the UK was long overdue.

IAN McCARTNEY,
1 Victoria Street,
London SW1H 0ET.

Panel must recognise impartiality

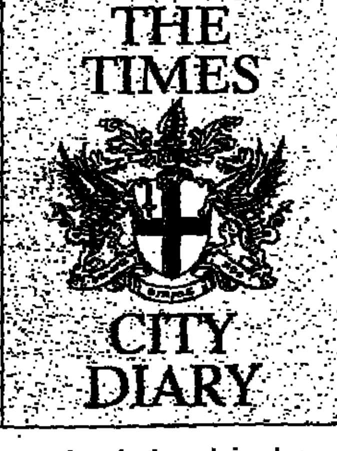
From Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale

Sir, I would like to rectify one point in your Commentary of January 7. I am not questioning the essence of the Panel on Takeovers and Mergers. I do question its present operational practice in terms of enforcement of its own Spirit, Principles and Rules, and its executive structure which ignores the "Rule against Bias".

I do believe that he or she must be seen to be impartial. It is relevant that the Panel itself recognizes the need for impartiality in Section 1(e) of the introduction to the Code. It could also recognise this at the executive level as there are three deputy directors general who would have to act if the director general were indisposed. They could therefore surely act if there is a potential conflict of interest.

Yours faithfully,
WOLFSON,
The Great Universal Stores,
Leconfield House,
Curzon Street W1Y 7FL.

Latin prep



AS WE pointed out in the Commentary yesterday, Bernard Asher may be relieved that he did not release Lonrho Africa's awful results before shareholders rejected Blakeney Management's attempts to oust him as the company's chairman. But it appears he is not out of the jungle yet.

The company's first annual general meeting since demerging from Lonrho is to take place next month. Mr Asher is not up for re-election, arguing that he does not need to stand as he survived the EGM vote. However, I understand that a number of legal experts are already pouring over the company's articles of association and the Companies Act to see if this is actually the case. If it is not Mr Asher may have to face his shareholders for a second time.

Meanwhile, Blakeney has not gone away. Miles Morland, the fund manager's boss, tells me that he was going to send out a detailed press release attacking Lonrho Africa's results but decided merely to say "*Res ipsa loquitur*", which is Latin for "the thing speaks for itself".



"The clock's for long service — I've been here nearly three months"

WITH the departure of Victoria Egan from Laura Ashley only five months after she arrived, its seems that the clothing retailer has decided on spring and autumn chief executives.

Sole invites

THOSE boys at Belgo Group are an odd lot. The invitations that have gone out for the opening of the new Belgo restaurant in New York at the end of this month are attached to a variety of clearly well-worn shoes. I'm told that this has got something to do with a Belgian beer that is traditionally served in an expensive wooden stand. Apparently, the waiters would only serve you the beer if you handed over a shoe, the theory being that you would get your shoe back once you'd handed the wooden stand back.

What's more, following in the vein of its two London restaurants, Belgo Noord and Belgo Centraal, the new venue is to be called Belgo Nieuw York. The boys have also come up with a bizarre spelling for their new Vietnamese-style restaurant opening in March in London's Percy Street. It will be called Bambou (sic).

Rothschild joy

I UNDERSTAND that the Champagne corks are popping at the Paris office of NM Rothschild (OK, OK I know that the Paris office is called Rothschild et Cie, get off my back). The reason for this jollity is that Rothschild has emerged as the top bank in French mergers and acquisitions for 1998, according to the appropriately but uninventively named magazine *Fusions & Acquisitions*.

The rise of the house of Rothschild has caused much consternation in Paris, as it signals once and for all the decline of Lazard Frères, the merchant bank that was once so powerful that it virtually ran France. In 1997 Lazard was eclipsed by Goldman Sachs. Un blip, suggested local experts. But in the following year Lazard was pushed back into third, with Goldman second.

All this is seen as more power to the elbow of David de Rothschild, heir apparent to Sir Evelyn as leader of the family bank and founder of Rothschild et Cie. But also watch out for the Paris dealmaker, Edward de Rothschild — David's half brother.

TRIPPING down Piccadilly the other day I though I might pop into Simpson's to pick up some bargains in the "Good buy" sale. But what is this I hear over the piped music? The 1970s hit I Will Survive *by Gloria Gaynor. Alas, as Simpson's is to close and will become a branch of Waterstone's, it won't.*

Single success

AS Neil Kinnock and John Kettley have proved, nothing improves your image among yoof quite as much as featuring in a pop song. Remember Tracey Ullman's version of *They Don't Know* — or Tribe of Toffs' *John Kettley is a Weatherman*? Phil White, chief executive of National Express, had hoped for similar stardom when he learned that The Divine Comedy (a pop group, by the way) was releasing a single called *National Express*. He played the CD to analysts, gave it away to the press, and offered to appear in the video for a cameo role — maybe as a bus driver.

Alas, the group have decided to shoot the entire video in a mental hospital with the lead singer being wheeled around acting like a madman. The main reference to buses comes in a gratuitously rude line about a stewardess. Never mind — there's always the hope of a remake of *On The Buses*.

JASON NISSÉ

Neil Hannon of The Divine Comedy: on the buses

Equities down on Brazil fears

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

[illegible]

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

[illegible]

UNDATED

[illegible]

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:

[illegible]

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	143.68	153.32	- 0.06	
-do- NAV to Jun 19	140.39	140.39		
UK Equity Safeguard	114.25	122.19	- 0.68	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 19	110.98	110.98		
US Eqy Safeguard	95.12	101.08	- 0.68	
Cash	959.66	964.45		6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	433.64	459.88	1.42	1.80
UK Smaller Cos	83.97	89.48	- 0.75	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	99.65	106.58	- 0.02	1.80
Geared UK Index	#24.632	#26.003	- 0.08	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	88.21	91.20	- 0.09	6.66
Monthly Inc	44.10	47.16†	- 0.03	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	375.47	396.80	+ 1.48	0.17
American Strat	184.28	196.65	- 0.72	
JG US Index	#28.963	#30.514	- 0.21	4.50
European Gen	459.55	486.10	- 1.11	
European Strat	212.91	227.75	- 3.31	
Japan Gen	109.16	115.50	+ 1.61	
Asia Pacific	64.34	68.67	- 1.19	1.09
Pacific Strat	88.10	94.21	- 0.29	
Greater China	149.97	160.39	- 2.60	
Latin America	54.49	58.21	- 2.39	
Intl Growth	200.68	214.47	+ 1.97	0.11
Balanced Exempt	188.84	195.69		2.18
Global Strategy	47.28	50.56	- 0.25	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trst				
Balanced Acc	83.26	88.57	- 0.12	1.72
Balanced Inc	74.80	79.57	- 0.11	1.72
Brit Exced	131.10	139.50	- 0.30	2.28
Brit Fxdints Acc	165.80	176.40	- 0.10	4.03
Brit Fxdints Inc	102.80	109.40	- 0.10	4.03
Europe	592.50	630.30	- 6.80	0.79

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 822 100				
Can Gen Dist	317.10	336.10†	+ 2.00	0.99
-do- Income Dist	171.00	181.20	- 0.80	2.72
-do- Accum	588.60	623.90	- 2.70	2.72
Gilt & Fxd Int	49.78	52.28	- 0.21	3.80
Growth Units	381.50	407.00	+ 2.30	1.15
Bond	210.50	221.80	- 0.50	4.50
Intl Growth	280.09	297.50	+ 1.00	0.11
North American	418.00	443.40	- 2.70	
Far East	179.50	192.00	- 3.20	0.90
UK Smaller Cos	257.00	274.98	+ 0.80	1.23
European	145.60	155.80		0.13
Japanese Growth	29.08	30.82	+ 0.36	
High Income	299.70	320.30	+ 1.40	2.75
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7489				
American & Gen	367.10	388.10	- 4.30	
European Inc	158.90	168.70	+ 0.10	
Smaller Cos (4-1)	104.10	110.80	- 3.10	2.28
Growth	755.60	803.90	- 2.50	1.19
Income & Growth #	585.10	622.50	+ 1.90	4.37
-do- Accum #	951.70	1012.50	+ 2.50	4.37
Japan & Gen	52.36	55.35	+ 1.50	
Hallmark Gwth	1770.00	1846.00†	- 7.00	0.88
-do- Accum	2256.00	2350.00	- 9.00	0.88
Special Sits	173.60	184.70†	- 0.30	1.19
High Yield	1866.00	1945.00	+ 6.00	3.83
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	126.76	134.67		2.00
American Portfolio	204.78	216.80		0.22
European Portfolio	223.36	237.65		0.22
High Income	60.60	64.03		5.71
Japanese Portfolio	47.10	49.89		
Pacific Portfolio	106.80	114.64		1.69
UK Equity	125.06	133.12		1.63
UK Equity & Bd	72.88	77.26		5.18

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Fa Eastern	292.30	311.90	- 0.10	
UK Special Sits	71.41	76.18	- 1.11	0.26
Fd of Inv Tsts	59.23	65.17	- 0.04	
High Income #	67.30	71.77	- 0.22	4.18
Financial Opps	78.48	85.70	- 0.02	0.73
Growth & Income #	58.08	61.94	- 0.26	2.10
Global Opps	56.96	60.75	- 0.04	0.72
LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 558 8800				
Bridge Income #	416.58	443.17	- 0.10	4.48
Eck Growth	143.33	152.48		0.59
Inc & Growth	102.42	108.96†	- 0.45	1.70

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
-do- Accum	144.50	152.90	- 0.50	2.09
Str East Asia	233.30	246.70	- 4.80	1.86
-do- Accum	322.40	340.90	- 6.70	1.86
UK Equity #	82.60	87.40†	- 0.20	4.04
-do- Accum #	244.10	258.20†	- 0.60	4.04
UK Growth	1564.40	1654.40	- 0.40	1.45
-do- Accum	1793.60	1896.80	- 0.40	1.45
MGM UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 01277 201 010 Enq: 01903 204 631				
European Growth	179.36	190.80		0.38

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Smaller Cos	109.22	116.19	- 0.63	1.68
Ever Spec Sit Inc	56.55	60.16	- 0.09	2.42
Ever Spec Sit Acc	60.98	64.87	- 0.09	2.42
Pennine Growth	53.54	56.96	- 0.12	1.54
LAZARD UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
Dealing: 0870 6066408				
UK Cap	594.40	630.70	+ 3.30	1.34
UK Inc/Gth #	634.70	671.10	- 2.70	3.22
UK Income #	424.90	449.30	- 2.80	4.40
UK Income Acc #	448.50	475.90	- 2.90	4.40
UK Sm Cos	316.20	337.20	- 0.40	2.11
Euro Gwth	268.90	284.30†	- 0.20	0.24

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Intl Bond	66.88	70.25	+ 0.26	2.83
Intl Equity Growth	117.52	124.63	+ 0.37	0.31
N Amer Growth	222.83	235.96	+ 1.58	0.14
Special Sits Growth	39.88	42.42	- 0.10	1.08
UK Growth	655.23	697.05	- 2.04	1.48
-do- Accum	942.33	1002.47	- 2.82	1.48
MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
01628 825087				
Balanced Fd #	1505.58	1526.68†		3
Income #	1257.90	1278.00†		4

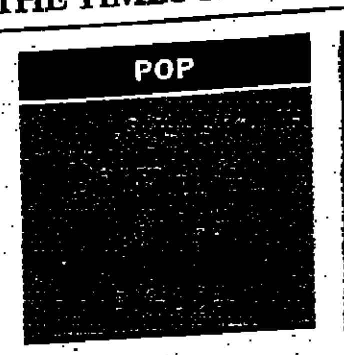
THEATRE

Measure for Measure gets political
PAGE 33

THE TIMES

ARTS

POP





'Tootsie' Dustin forgets his dress sense

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

Hollywood is never short of people tossing bizarre writs at each other. You have heard of vanity publishing? Well, this is vanity suing. But even hardened observers of Tinseltown trauma are awestruck by the latest wacky courtroom tiff. A Los Angeles judge is at present pondering whether Dustin Hoffman, a movie star of the most dogged Method-Acting persuasion, should be awarded $5 million in damages because *Los Angeles* magazine depicted him in a woman's dress without seeking his permission.

Students of motion-picture history will realise that there are complex cultural references involved here. In his 1982 hit *Tootsie*, Hoffman did indeed dress up as a woman — and very ravishing he looked, too. So why is the magazine being sued? Apparently because it showed Hoffman in the *wrong sort of dress*. Using computer technology it doctored the *Tootsie* poster, removing a rather M&S-style red gown from Hoffman's lithe body and replacing it with a fetching off-the-shoulder number. The altered picture was then put on the fashion pages with the caption "Dustin Hoffman isn't a drag in a butter-colored silk gown by Richard Tyler and Ralph Lauren heels."

Had such an unauthorised vision of loveliness appeared in an advertisement, Hoffman's case for compensation would be much stronger: his image would clearly have been exploited for commercial gain. But Hoffman cannily claims that a magazine's fashion-spread *is* virtually an advertisement for the clothes portrayed.

Nonsense, the magazine retorts. Fashion pages are editorial, and therefore protected by the First Amendment. I leave historians to ponder whether Benjamin Franklin and company intended the noble prose of the American Constitution to be applied to the case of a cross-dressing actor depicted in a frock that is not his own. It's not impossible, I suppose.

Anyway, Hoffman — who seems to live in an irony-free zone — says that his "right of publicity" has been violated. On the other hand, *Los Angeles* magazine's position is also not without ironies. After all, it is owned by Disney, one of the world's most litigious organisations when protecting its own sacred Mickey Mouse trademark.

Of course there are bigger issues involved here than Hoffman's bust size. The phrase "the camera never lies" has always been one of the world's great lies. People have been tampering with photographs since snapping began. Either it has been done whimsically, as in that celebrated 1917 "proof" of fairies at the bottom of someone's garden; or for more sinister reasons, as when banished ministers disappeared retrospectively from official photographs in Stalin's Russia.

But computers have made photograph manipulation much more sophisticated. For instance, I could approach some mischievous operative in *The Times* graphics department with two perfectly sober photographs of, say, Miss Melinda Messenger and the Archbishop of Canterbury — and within minutes we could fiddle the originals so that these two pillars of British society appeared to be caught in the most thrilling conjunction.

Nor is this dangerous technological alchemy confined to still images. So many television advertisements now tamper with old films in the cause of flogging new cars (think of Dennis Hopper appearing to motor past his younger self in *Easy Rider*) that the trick has become a cliché. Now there is talk of creating "new" Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo movies. The computer will digitally store the screen legend's characteristic body movements and vocal traits, then feed them as required into new scenes and dialogue.

A macabre idea? Perhaps, but I bet the interest will be enormous. After all, tomorrow a vast crowd will gather at Wembley Arena for *Elvis Presley — The Concert*, in which the voice and screen image of the pelvically mobile one will be meshed electronically with live backing from his former associates. "This marks the first time that an entertainer who is no longer living has headlined a concert," the promoters say. Oh really? Have they never seen the Royal Variety Performance?

You don't have to be Mystic Morrison to foresee image manipulation becoming one of the big legal battlegrounds. More and more celebrities will be going to court, *à la* Dustin, to protect their "right of publicity". M'learned friends will have a ball.

And what about the rights of the dead? Who is to say that Garbo would have approved of her computerised image eerily presiding over some sultry new drama? Surely at this late stage in her career she really might want to be alone.

The easy answer is "her heirs and estate will protect her". But one's dearly beloved relatives are not necessarily the most scrupulous guardians of one's posthumous reputation, especially if they can smell money in the air. Has Jacqueline du Pré been well served by her sister? I merely ask.

The fact is that computerised image manipulation, like genetic engineering, has leapt out at us before we have had time to devise a relevant code of ethics. But the genie can't be stuffed back into the bottle now. People in public life probably have to accept that if they want to breathe the heady oxygen of publicity they must renounce control of their image for ever. There's no point in suddenly shouting at the media, in the immortal words of the Princess Royal, "Why don't you just naff off?" They won't.

So all in all, I think Dustin has been a bit daft. Mind you, if *Los Angeles* magazine ever depicts *me* in a Richard Tyler silk gown I shall certainly sue. For one thing, the Editor has exclusive serialisation rights to the bodies of all *Times* journalists. For another, I never wear anything except Armani. And a string vest in winter, of course.

DEE CONWAY

Guns and girls were all Greek to us

OPERA

As someone sings in *The Mikado*, "and I am right, and you are right, and everything is quite correct," which just about sums up Paul Barker's new children's opera, given just two performances on Wednesday and Thursday by Lontano and the New London Children's Choir. The general message is that war is simply frightful and killing people awfully wrong, something that those who go to opera in Western Europe have more or less hoisted in, but maybe Lontano is planning an extensive tour of the Balkans, followed by a run at the Pentagon.

The piece is also written for girls only, 26 of them, but after that the correctness starts to wear a bit thin. *Stone Angels* lasts for about 40 minutes, and there is a long synopsis in the programme, a wise precaution since without it even the most warm-hearted audience would be hard put to know what on earth was going on.

Roughly speaking, survivors of an air crash on an island off Greece encounter two groups of girls: Stoners (proper little Ladies of the Flies, nasty) and Glooks (peaceable, nice). War is raging overhead. After assorted ill-organised mayhem — the dramaturgy is simply chaotic — one of the girls refuses to flee the Stoners, half of whom are so surprised that they lay down their stones and join her before everyone shame-facedly shuffles off stage — the direction, such as there is, is chaotic as well. Empty stage, long postlude, end of opera. In one very peculiar episode, aircraft manned by the girls' parents (I *think* I'm right) drop pornographic magazines on the island, and it was here that the absence of any boys seemed especially regrettable.

Barker is an experienced opera composer and cannot be accused of writing down to his performers: tricky intervals and rhythms, vocal lines hard to pitch. Fine, but the children — all of whom deserve highest praise — had to concentrate so hard on their music that words took second place and were often inaudible, and passages in Greek were no help. There was a great deal of speech and melodrama, and neat differentiation of musical language for the two groups. Odaline de la Martinez conducted the five-strong Lontano chamber group efficiently.

The main point of interest in the evening was how it all came to pass. The absence of anyone to pull it into some sort of coherent dramatic shape proved fatal.

RODNEY MILNES



St Trinian's revisited: members of the excellent New London Children's Choir struggle through the chaotic *Stone Angels*

Magic circle

CONCERTS

Goehrfest is the pithy, if less than elegant, title of an enterprising series of concerts taking place in Cambridge over the next couple of months. The occasion is the retirement of Alexander Goehr, who has been Professor of Music at Cambridge University since 1976, but the opportunity has been taken to celebrate and promote the work of the many composers who have come within Goehr's orbit over the past quarter-century. Robin Holloway and Hugh Wood, along with Goehr himself, have been at the centre of this circle, but younger generations too (George Benjamin, Julian Anderson, Thomas Adès and many others) have come to prominence and all are represented in Goehrfest.

For the opening concert on Wednesday night in the West Road Concert Hall, the University's Quartet in Residence, the Endellion String Quartet, gave a neatly balanced programme of Haydn, Schumann and Goehr (the latter's String Quartet No 3, dating from 1975-76). If the first movement of the Goehr was modelled to some extent, by the composer's own admission, on Beethoven (specifically the E Minor Piano Sonata Op 90), then the second movement recalls Haydn in its quizzically conversational phrase endings. The third movement is altogether more opaque, however, more densely argued, and the Endellion steered an adroit course through these difficult waters.

In Haydn's Quartet in D Major Op 71 No 2 the ensemble's close rapport enabled it to explore a range of moods over the course of the four movements. Well-sprung rhythms gave a buoyant feel to the faster passages, while the Adagio cantabile was as songful as its title implies.

Schumann's debt to Beethoven, in his A Minor Quartet Op 41 No 1, is rather more explicit than Goehr's. In the Adagio, the long-breathed main theme inevitably recalls the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The Endellion succeeded in sustaining these arching lines throughout the movement, and offered a smoothly contoured, rather than sharply defined discourse in the first movement. Despite Schumann's dedication of the quartet to Mendelssohn, they perhaps rightly treated the Scherzo not as one of that composer's elfin creations but as a sturdier, more passionate utterance.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Going solo

We've seen the conductor, we've admired the soprano wife and now we've heard the instrumentalist. Or some of us have. The prospect of witnessing Sakari Oramo's first appearance as a violinist in Symphony Hall, directing the strings of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in Bach's Concerto in E major while coping with the solo part, proved to be a less than irresistible attraction. Bearing in mind the rest of the eccentrically compiled programme, which included also Jean-Féry Rebel's *Les Eléméns* and Brahms's Second Symphony, it is not very surprising.

Obviously, those who stayed away are not to be credited with any kind of prescience but the fact is, it was not a particularly persuasive performance of the Bach. It was intelligently phrased and coloured and, though not exactly authentic, it was more than acceptably stylish. The violin line seemed thin in these acoustic conditions, however, and there was not much improvement in this respect even when the soloist-director's nerves settled down and what had been an overbright sound relaxed into something less edgy.

After the Bach, it made good musical sense, if not good box office, to go on to another Baroque work of a quite different kind. The beginning of *Les Eléméns*, which opens with a prelude called *Chaos* and with dissonant harmonies based on a chord of the 13th, is quite astonishing. The pre-Strauss use of two piccolos to represent birdsong and the pre-Wagner fire music are less sensational but no less interesting. It was difficult, on the other hand, to believe in the legitimacy of the ceilidh-like yelps from members of the orchestra in the *Tambourin*. Until a smart musicologist demonstrates the authenticity of these interventions scepticism is not out of order.

As the most Baroque-minded of the great composers of the 19th century, Brahms was well placed in the second half of the concert. It was reassuring to hear the Second Symphony so well done in the traditionally mellow, lyrical manner with nothing too urgent or querulous about it, with a splendidly sonorous orchestral presence, sensitively shaped instrumental solos and a powerfully cumulative structural purpose. If the brass-laden ending seemed more manic than triumphant, more in the manner of Tchaikovsky than Brahms, that was the one miscalculation in an otherwise idiomatically and perceptively characterised interpretation.

GERALD LARNER

Still under a cloud

Robert Holman's play *Bad Weather* has not improved on the journey from Stratford to the Barbican. Set on a rough Middlesbrough housing estate, all broken windows, families and lives, it purports to question whether environment, upbringing or innate character breeds bad behaviour. Every so often, a thoughtful and subtle idea raises its head, only to sink under the weight of an under-articulated script.

Teenage troublemaker Jamie is on trial for a crime committed by his friend Luke, whose 17-year-old sister Rhona is carrying Jamie's child. Rhona tries to convince Luke to confess; Jamie's mother Kay is not so sure, since she turns out to care more for Luke than her son. Noel, a juror who believes in Jamie's innocence, pitches



in by starting an adulterous affair with Kay, and he and Rhona summon Kay's old French nanny to sort things out.

French nannies? Council estates? Implausibly, Kay is the heir to a viticultural fortune frittered away by a spendthrift mother. This allows everyone (except poor Jamie, who has been put away for four years) to up sticks and go picnicking in the Loire, where the sadistically severe nanny succumbs to the adolescent attractions of Luke, and like Kay refuses to trade him in for Jamie's freedom. Silly enough anyway; but unfortunately, Paul Popplewell's callow, charmless Luke makes a wholly unconvincing sex-god, which torpedoes any last shred of credibility.

Too often the dialogue is artificial, and though a constant, if studied, intensity holds the attention, Steven Pimlott's static direction fails to liven things up. But there are incidental pleasures. The promising Emma Handy yaks away engagingly as spiky motormouth Rhona, and Ryan Pope's forceful Jamie manages to balance whining self-pity with residual pride. Susan Brown as Kay is frequently touching, though she cannot do much with such an enigmatic part. The unobtrusive set, all graffiti-daubed metal shutters and concrete slabs — a bit like the Barbican — gives good service.

"It's all degrees, a bit of knowledge here, a bit of understanding there. It's all a mess," says Luke towards the end. To be charitable, maybe Holman intended to suggest that understanding motivations, ascribing guilt, is an impossible task. If so, it does not make for gripping drama. A brave play, but ultimately unrewarding.

NIGEL CLIFF

DONALD COOPER



Caught in the Bard's Viennese whirl: Robert Glenister plays the Duke as a man propelled into a nervous breakdown, while Clare Holman is an Isabella pushed on to the sidelines

Beauty and a universal beast

Most actors playing the Duke begin *Measure for Measure* in fine, princely style. They calmly hand over the running of Vienna to the puritannical Angelo and sedately leave for their sabbatical. Not in Michael Boyd's production. Robert Glenister slumps grey-faced in a chair with a gin bottle while extracts from Revelation play on the wooden wall behind him, and then, hearing his aides beating down the door, totters down a walkway into the stalls. Angelo, Escalus *et al* are left to hear his instructions relayed to them via the sort of creaky gramophone you might have found in Schnitzler's Vienna, circa 1900.

It is awkward: it involves unfortunate cuts; it makes nonsense of Escalus's later claim, that the Duke is "a gentleman of all temperance"; yet I cannot regret it. One reason why *Measure for Measure* is classified as a problem play is that the Duke's motives in disguising himself as a friar and spying on Angelo are hard to explain in any normal way: so hard that scholars have been impelled to see him as symbolising God, Christ, James I, Heaven knows whom. Glenister's Duke has, you feel, been propelled into a nervous breakdown by the confusions and contradictions, expectations and disappointments of exercising power in messy Vienna. How will a quite different kind of man — the cool, tough, stainless Angelo — deal with the pressures?

This emphasis gives the play a more overtly political tilt than usual; and, though I blinked at the moment

THEATRE

[redacted]

when the returning Duke's irregulars disarmed Angelo's well-drilled officers and ensured that there would be no coup in dear old Vienna, I cannot regret that either.

Stephen Boxer gives a quietly terrifying performance as the corrupt incorruptible himself. At first he wears the sort of Russian peasant costume that Bolshevik intellectuals affected in the early days, later a grey uniform that, were you to add a swastika or skull emblem, would suggest the SS. And all along he justifies what might be sartorial tricksiness with the quality of his acting.

Boxer's Angelo is aggressive, cynical, arrogantly self-confident, contemptuous of lesser mortals and, in his frosty, dispassionate way, very fond indeed of power. We have heard this man's dehumanising rhetoric in our own era: the all-too-credible vow to sacrifice his brother or son to some abstract "justice"; the frightening declaration that he shows most pity when he is harshest, "for then I pity those I do not know". He will no doubt be primly spreading misery in the next century too, for he is a universal monster.

Boyd's approach, bold and even brilliant though it is, rewards some areas of the play more than others. The object of Angelo's predatory lust, Isabella, is somewhat sidelined, feelingly played though she is by Clare Holman. But the brothel and jail scenes are pretty strong. When whores are lazily whipping transvestite men, or the pimp Pompey is playing comically sadistic games with his fellow prisoners, you can see why Boxer's punitive Angelo has political appeal.

You can also see why Glenister's human, tolerant Duke has despaired. His rendering of the great speech about the virtues of death comes across, not as a prolonged extract from the *Dictionary of Quotations*, but as a personal expression of ontological derision. After all, in a world as ungovernable as this, how does a good prince cope?

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Talking body language

Clothes? They're so, like, yesterday. Even royalty now knows that what really talks is the body and what you do to it; pierce it, tattoo it, cut it, expose it. Mass communication has destroyed the tribalism of costume; every kid from Tashkent to Tokyo sports Identikit combat pants and funky Nikes; the Mods must be turning in their parkas.

Performed, for the most part, in the nude, Gilles Jobin's *A+B=X* creates a new abstract of the human body. The three performers pull themselves through dim pools of greenish light in a series of extraordinary contortions; now headless, now dismembered, now popping with strings of tensed muscle; the low unnatural colour picking out their contours like an alien landscape.



Positions more often seen in the pages of *Readers' Wives* are rendered sexless, played out against a harsh industrial soundtrack. Such conceptualism is cut through with a knowing humour; after spending a quarter of an hour with their naked bottoms held aloft, the trio retreat with a comic wiggle of their rears, in a kind of "arty crowd you may be, but we know what you're looking at" fashion.

In a way the dehumanisation of *A+B=X* is easier to accept because of the perfection on display; not simply of the bodies themselves, but of the sustained control of the excruciating sequences they put themselves through. The clean lines of the movement pieces are framed by film footage of the arch self-mutilator Franco B in all his ghoulish glory.

Predictably, the moment the cast don clothing, they appear more exposed than before, and the sight of Jobin mooning is surprisingly grim. The final performed image of a woman standing naked with her face covered, glowing white in the glare of four spotlights, is still shockingly vulnerable, despite all that has gone before; the naked body is after all, always more than the sum of its parts.

HETTIE JUDAH

Positively uninhibited

In his new play Brad Fraser continues to make his characters jump through the hoops of love, sex and honesty. Is it possible, so his cartoonist hero Matt is presumably asking, to manage all three at the same time? Matt is gay, in a fitfully tolerant Toronto, and the immensely successful creator of Spum Boy and Fridge Magnet Girl, whose adventures we see him developing with his working partner, Rachel. Played at the Royal Exchange by Ben Daniels, he is handsome, effervescent and projects the character's fierce intelligence, but he has now turned 30; none of his relationships has lasted beyond three months, not even an early marriage (shown in Fraser's previous play, *Poor Super Man*).

If the fault lies not in himself, might it be a consequence of being gay, in a world predominantly straight, or living at the time of Aids? Airing these concerns, he embarks on an affair with Ian Gelder's politician, whose guilt-fuelled domestic arrangements suggest successful hoop-jumping is nothing but desperate fantasy.

This is an uninhibited play about inhibitions. Matt's wit and honesty make him a thor-

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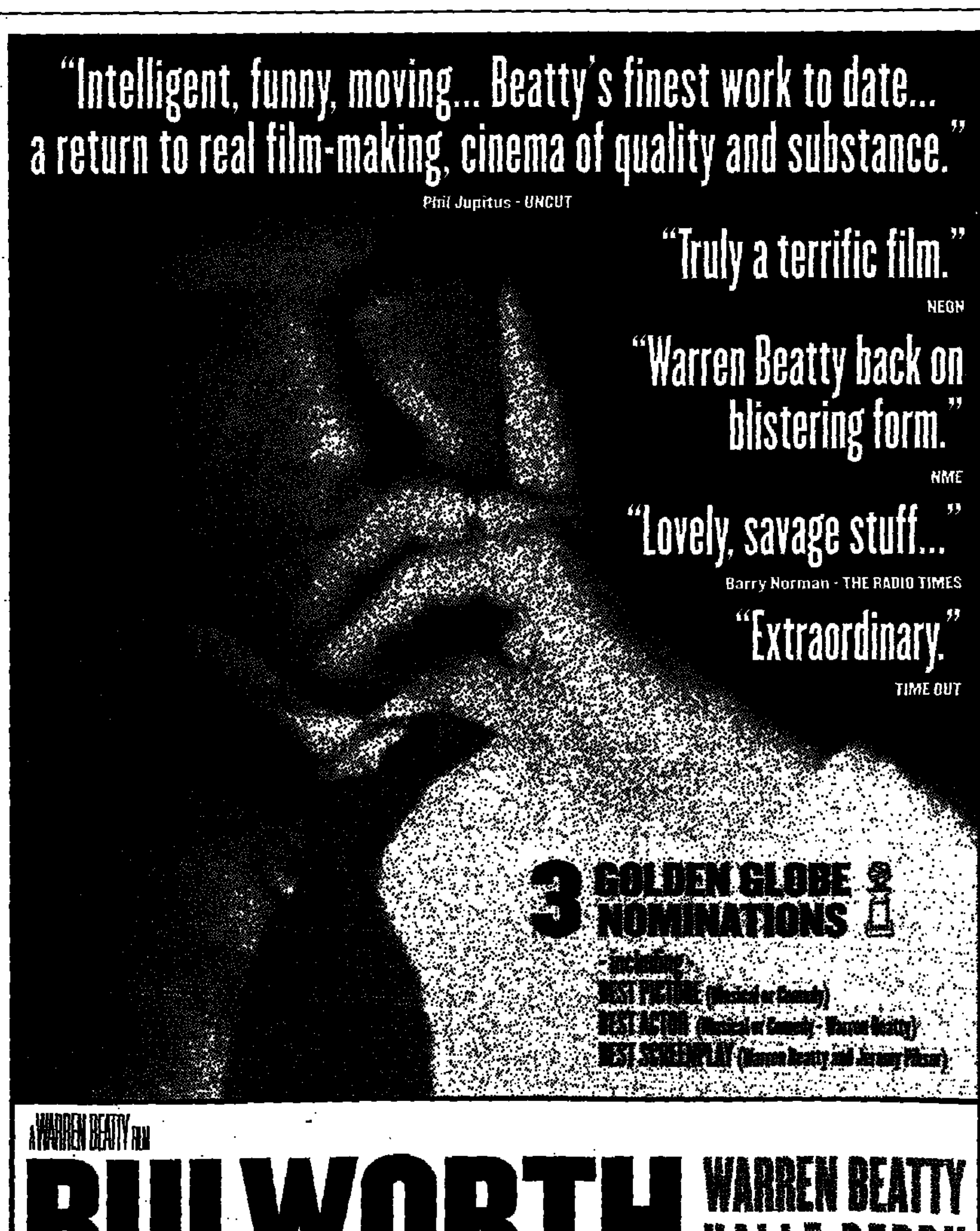
oughly positive character, and Daniels and Ruth Lass create a convincing office relationship.

Doubts about the play surface in those areas where Fraser explores the serious follies of his politician, Martin. Here is a man who was a virgin till 35, and is now so keen to act as substitute dad to homeless waifs that he supports the soft drug habit of one and the fecklessness of another. Almost every scene where Gelder appears with young Rex (a flush-faced Daniel Roberts) or with the rattier Yves (Nathan Willcocks) ends with him digging into his pocket for more dollars.

Matt's openness is so placed as to contrast with Martin's complicated burden of anger, longing and grievous mistakes. The rage that can be felt by the Positive (as distinct from the simply positive) for those who are uninfected steals in upon us during the play's later scenes, and Matt's own dangerous "mistake" follows logically. But while the air of withholding plans and feelings suits the character as given, the sources of his compulsions remain out of reach.

Marianne Elliott's direction seems to be acknowledging this by closing with the five characters as far apart as possible on this open stage. At other times the openness works against audibility in a play of fast Canadian talk and cultural predicates. But if the play's centre retreats from us the outer reaches do capture the quality of discontented lifestyles that is Fraser's particular skill.

JEREMY KINGSTON



■ LISTINGS
Ostrovsky at the National

ARTS

■ POP OPINION
Trouble at Top of the Pops

RECOMMENDED THIS WEEKEND

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

THE FOREST: Alan Ayckbourn adapts Ostrovsky's sardonic 1870 comedy, with Michael Feast's impoverished actor trying to impress his rich aunt (Frances de la Tour). Anthony Page directs.
Lyttelton (0171-452 3000). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm. ⓢ

THE COUNTRY WIFE: Martin Parr plays the randy Horner pursuing Victoria Pembroke in the title role. A Present Moment production of Wycherley's lustful comedy.
Bridewell (0171-936 3456). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

ANNIVERSARY CONCERT: The London Mozart Players Chamber Ensemble return to the venue of their first concert to celebrate 50 years of prolific musicmaking. A festive programme includes Til Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche by Strauss framed by works by Danzi and Schubert.
Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Sunday, 4pm. ⓢ

GOETHE NACHT: Marking the 250th anniversary of the birth of the great German wordsmith Matthew Best conducts the Corydon Orchestra and Singers in an evening of music and song with a suitably lyrical theme.
St John's, Smith Square (0171-222 1061). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The award-winning Budapest Festival Orchestra under its charismatic founder/conductor Ivan Fischer makes its first visit here with an all-Mozart programme. With the noted pianist Alexei Lubimov as soloist in the Piano Concerto K453.
Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tomorrow, 8pm. ⓢ



Josephine Barstow sings Richard Strauss in Leeds

LEEDS: Opera North presents a gala concert dedicated to the music of Richard Strauss. Steven Sloane conducts the English Northern Philharmonia in such memorable numbers as the Rosenkavalier Suite and the Dance of the Seven Veils. With Josephine Barstow as soloist
Grand Theatre (0113-245 9351). Tonight and tomorrow, 8pm. ⓢ

MANCHESTER: Yan Pascal Tortelier conducts the BBC Philharmonic in a concert celebrating the centenary of Poulenc. Peter Donohoe and Martin Roscoe perform the French composer's Concerto for Two Pianos with Janice Watson as soloist in Stabat Mater.
Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 9000). Tomorrow, 7.30pm. ⓢ

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **BRIEF CANDLE:** Denis Quilley plays various European celebrities who fell for the charms of young Marie Bashkirtseff (Celia White) in the 1880s and figured in her posthumously published diaries. Stella Quilley directs.
New End (0171-794 0022). ⓢ

□ **THE DECEIVED:** The Italian source for Shakespeare's Twelfth Night but much more of a cross-dressing sexual romp. Kenneth Rea's production for Jet Theatre relocates it to the 1920s.
Riverside Studios (0181-237 1111). ⓢ

◪ **LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EUNUCHS.** Ewan McGregor in the title role of a sentimentalised revival of David Halliwell's play about art-student failure and fascism.
Comedy (0171-369 1731).

◪ **RICHARD III:** Robert Lindsay puts on the hump for Elijah Moshinsky's RSC production; transfer from Stratford.
Savoy (0171-836 8888) ⓢ

□ **THE GLORY OF LIVING:** British debut for Alabama-born Rebecca Gilman's drama of excitement and danger in the trailer parks. Kathryn Hunter directs.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000).

□ **KRAPP'S LAST TAPE:** Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient sensualist replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed Breath: duration 35 seconds.
Arts Theatre (0171-836 3334).

□ **LORD OF THE FLIES:** William Golding's vivid tale of terror and death on paradise island, adapted by Nigel Williams and directed by Marcus Romer for Pilot Theatre Co.
Lyric, W6 (0181-741 8701). +

□ **THE MEMORY OF WATER:** Alison Steadman, Samantha Bond and Julia Sawalha star in Shelagh Stephenson's acclaimed drama of family memories. Terry Johnson directs.
Vaudeville (0171-836 9987).

□ **THE STREET OF CROCODILES:** Welcome return for Theatre de Complicite's inventive staging of Bruno Schulz's magical recollections of pre-Nazi Poland.
Queens (0171-494 5041).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

HILARY AND JACKIE (15): Anand Tucker's controversial, wildly misguided biopic about the late Jacqueline du Pré ostensibly celebrates the cellist's genius. But scratch it and you discover a spoilt, selfish schemer who preyed on her family like a vampire. With Emily Watson, Rachel Griffiths.

PRACTICAL MAGIC (12): Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman star as witches in a flashy gothic soap about sisters with fatal attraction. It is tempered by several seat-clutching special effects but the parable about girl power and the right to be abnormal is too sweet to digest. Griffin Dunne directs.

BULWORTH (18): Warren Beatty's disillusioned senator hires a hitman to kill him and suddenly discovers a taste for telling ugly home truths. A shameless ego trip for Beatty, but a wonderful new comic spin on political manipulation and mendacity. Beatty produces, stars and directs.

CLASS TRIP (15): Quirky French thriller about a school trip that is haunted by the waking nightmares of a young boy, scarred by his past and fearful of the future. Claude Miller directs this award-winning piece of creepy suspense.

54 (15): Puny fairytale about a young beefcake (Ryan Phillippe) who finds celebrity and sex in Manhattans most famous 1970s disco. Unfortunately the film refuses to step as lightly as its golden soundtrack. Mike Myers salvages some debauched comedy as club owner, Steve Rubell.

THE POLYGRAPH (ICA): The inconclusive results of a lie detector test turn the life of a murder suspect and struggling student, Patrick Goyette, into a hell of nightmare possibilities. Stylish but impenetrable mystery from Canadian guru Robert Lepage.

CURRENT

MEET JOE BLACK (12): Brad Pitt's comic, charming Joe Black, aka Death, bribes Anthony Hopkins's media tycoon to introduce him to the joys of life. Director Martin Brest tries to give equal credibility to both characters, but ends up with a long-winded, uneven melodrama. Claire Forlani supplies the bewitching love interest.

THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (18): Christina Ricci plays a caustic, trashy 16-year-old who stitches up her gay step-brother by stealing his boyfriend and high-tailing it to LA. A blistering comedy on political correctness. Written and directed by Don Roos

What have they done to my songs?

Like all beloved institutions, *Top of the Pops* should be cherished. Actually, just leaving it alone would help



CAITLIN MORAN

It's as broken as a dropped clock. It is dull yet grossly insulting. I could be wrong, but I catch the whiff of focus group from its carcass: programmes don't become as bland and annoying as *Top of the Pops* is without some puffed-up pigboy from management gathering C2s in a Novotel outside Purley and asking them what they think about Fatboy Slim and 911. There have been multiple-choice questionnaires involved. Boxes have been ticked. People have been asked: "What would you like *Top of the Pops* to be like in the future?"

What a stupid question. We aren't psychic! We don't know what the future of TV holds! We can only refer to the past! The answer to "What would you like *Top of the Pops* to be like?" is "I'd like it to have Queen and the Beatles on every week, please, and be presented by a magical mythical beast with the body of Marilyn Monroe and the soul of Elvis."

Failing the existence of this creature, however, the producer of *Top of the Pops* has couriered in Kate Thornton.

I can't stand her. Too ordinary to be a low-rent Melinda Messenger, but not sparky enough to be pop's Anthea Turner. Thornton is the living, breathing embodiment of that horrible belief that Being Pushy is a Virtue in Itself. As the editor of *Smash Hits* she presided over a circulation slip while Britain underwent a teen band explosion and, as part of the panel that compiled the Power 300 for *The Observer* some months ago, she was party to a list that rated Geri Halliwell, Richard Ashcroft of the Verve and Noel Gallagher as having more power than the chairman of ICI. Her interviewing technique consists of shouting questions at celebrities, and then engaging in disconcerting, hyperactive pouting while they answer.

Alas, those with whom Thornton shares presenting duties are scarcely better. Jamie Theakston — previously 15ft tall and 100 per cent beautiful — is having a rough year. Since his very public rejection by that bird from All Saints, he appears to have shrunk. Where once he beamed and leapt and winked, he now skulks. He is a broken man living in the shadow of Mount Dumped. Jayne Middlemiss also seems to be struggling with her presenting chores: she twists her face through the Gurn Olympics in order to appear Intelligent, Sexy and Tough at the same time, and still ends up looking like a drunken Geordie lass shouting "Kick him! Kill him!" in a nightclub car park.

Presenters are never the biggest problem, though. *Top of the Pops* has weathered Jimmy Savile, DLT and the unearthly leer of Simon Mayo, and still managed to sum up the epoch every week. No, its current malaise has arisen because whoever holds its soul in his palm does not seem to realise it is not just another chart show. *Top of the Pops* is pure myth, pure magic. It is holy. Shirley Manson from Garbage explained it best: "If you get on *Top of the Pops* then nothing really bad ever happens to you again, and you won't ever die."

The show's previous producer, Rik Blaxhill, understood this: he knew it was a freak parade, a dream academy, a place from which otherwise unemployable visionaries broadcast into suburban homes and blow kids' minds. He knew his music, so he could pick bands from the week's Top 40 knowing who would shine and rock. He had the acid-fried visionary Julian Cope presenting the show in a witch's hat and tiny shorts. Blaxhill also gave presenting employment to Bear van Beers, a joyful pneumatic Dutch brunette who dressed in S&M leathers and sent herself up while exuding utter, delirious, dog-like delight at the idea of being on TV. Blaxhill teased the best out of *TOTP*'s tried and trusty format.

However, the new producer Chris Cowey has tried to change the programme in a touchy-feely, focus-group kind of way. His first innovation, presumably in order to comfort older viewers, is the dull, context-less inclusion of a track from the No 1 album. What's wrong with that? Well, No 1 albums almost invariably have a single in the Top Ten anyway; that's why the album's at No 1 in the first place. And secondly, *Top of the Pops* is a programme about *the singles chart*. It's a fairly simple concept, and one which takes unkindly to a surreal look at an entirely different chart. You might as well include a quick shufti at the Nationwide League.

The other revamp feature is the sporadic glances "backstage", supposed to reveal what a glittery, panting party *TOTP* is. I suspect that a blind hermit could have told the producer what backstage at *TOTP* is really like: famous people locked in dressing rooms with their entourage. I mean, the *TOTP* studios are in a big building made of concrete! Where the tea is orange! And you have to hang around all day not drinking! It is assuredly not Studio 54 being gatecrashed by Dionysus and some naked, spiral-eyed mates he met in the pub.

But it's not all doom and gloom. The programme may now be utter bilge, but I think the "controversial" new Friday night slot works very well. I frequently forget to watch it.

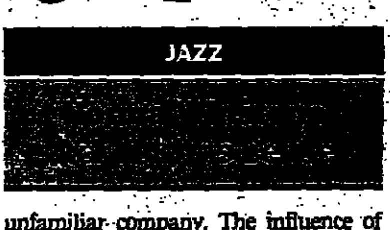
MARK ALLAN/ALPHA



Kate Thornton's style as *Top of the Pops* presenter does not go down well chez Moran

Propping up the isobars

JAZZ



No other jazz singer in Britain has such an impressive stylistic range as Norma Winstone. At one extreme, her voice is a pure-toned musical instrument, delicately negotiating the most intricate of melody lines in a perfectly matched flow of wordless syllables. At the other, she is a sublime interpreter of lyrics.

Right now, she is at the peak of her form in both genres. A few days before Christmas I heard her pacing Kenny Wheeler's oblique trumpet note for note in an evening of his big band compositions at London's Vortex Club, her translucent upper register adding an ethereal timbre to the ensemble. Meanwhile her current CD of duos with pianist John Taylor, *Like Song, Like Weather*, demonstrates her ability to mould the lyrics of a song into a dramatic miniature.

Her current tour with pianist John Donaldson's trio offers plenty of opportunities to hear both sides of her work, plus the added bonus of hearing her in unfamiliar company. The influence of her long-term associates John Taylor and Kenny Wheeler is still obvious, overtly in the form of arrangements, and more subtly in Winstone's phrasing, but Donaldson is his own man, and shares Winstone's stylistic breadth. His playing alternates between a brash confidence and delicate support, but he retains an air of living dangerously, especially in Billie Holiday's *If the Moon Turns Green* and his own *Setpiece*.

Winstone's wordless style was at its best on John McLoughlin's *Little Miss Valley*, her voice catching the nuances of guitar riffs and falling neatly into some complex unison passages with the piano. At the other extreme, she found plenty to work on in Sue Shattock's lyrics to *Oh My Darling*, a reworked Pat Metheny song that created a fleeting sense of holiday mood. This ability to conjure up the essence of place and time in her interpretations has brought an unusual specialism into Winstone's work. More than any other singer, she concentrates on singing about the weather, and brought a convincing dampness into the title song of her recent album *Manhattan in the Rain*.

Both sides of her work came together in a couple of songs by Antonio Carlos Jobim. The cranky, amateur lyrics of *Two Kites* were matched by her scatting on *This Happy Madness*, with surprise flurries into the very highest register. With Andy Cleyndert's relaxed bass and Tristran Maillot's drums in support, there is no jazz singer in the country to match her.

ALYN SHIPTON

■ **POP ALBUMS**
Snowpony impress

ARTS

■ **TOMORROW**
Critic's choice in Metro

Happy birthday suit to youth

Crazy name, crazy guys: Canada's Barenaked Ladies have put humour in the charts. Paul Sexton reports

Success in showbusiness has many occupational hazards, but they do not usually include being assaulted with packaged food. Such, though, is the lot of Barenaked Ladies, the Canadian band who put a decade of hard labour into their newfound North American stardom — their album, *Stunt*, has gone triple platinum in America — and who will be back on an English stage next week, dodging boxes of macaroni cheese.

To describe a Ladies concert as lively is like calling Bart Simpson playful, and one of the joys of their belated breakthrough is that it proves that a sense of humour and creative excellence need not be oil and water in the rock world. As they proved on previous UK visits in less celebrated times, the Barenaked boys will charm total strangers with shows of maniacal, Goonish jollity and damn good tunes. Plus that unusual concert tradition: where the Beatles got jelly beans and Tom Jones gets knickers, this five-piece has tins of apple sauce and boxes of macaroni cheese lobbed at it.

"We're trying to curb that a little bit," says co-writer and singer Ed Robertson. Have they gone all serious and arty, then? No, stresses bassist Jim Creeggan; they would just rather not have to play in hard hats: "Maybe one idiot in the audience would put a little more steam behind the throw and hit somebody. You get hit by food, it sucks." Robertson adds, philosophically: "But you know that going into rock'n'roll."

Last month at Madison Square Garden in New York, Barenaked Ladies performed at an all-star concert staged by the city's top-rated pop radio station, Z100. Lesser men would have been daunted by an audience of screamy, dreamy ten-year-olds awaiting the appearance of pin-ups such as N Sync and 98 Degrees, but the band made them all rock and roar, especially with a gloriously absurd closing medley that stapled together songs like *Gettin' Jiggy Wit' It*, *My Heart Will Go On* and *Bittersweet Symphony*.

But, much as one smiles at their compositions such as *Be My Yoko Ono* and *If I Had $1,000,000*, it would be misleading to file the Ladies in the novelty section. As they underline again on *Stunt* with songs such as *Alcohol* and *When You Dream*, they can do shade as well as light. "Our live shows are off the wall and fun," says Robertson, "but especially with the new record, people get a lot clearer picture of what the band's about musically. There's still fun on the record, but it's not as overt as it's been in the past.

> 'We're Herman's Hermits meets Henson's Muppets'

"I don't care when people use the word 'zany' about us because sometimes we are ridiculous, but when it's used to detract from what the band does musically, then I have a problem with it, because for me those are two very separate things. People say 'You should do stand-up', and we always say no. It's just that you don't expect to see a band that makes you laugh, but if you came along expecting a comedy night, you'd be very disappointed.

"I like to think our music is like an honest conversation. If you're sitting with a friend over the course of an evening, you don't just make jokes all night and you don't talk serious all night."

Robertson's co-writer and singer, Steven Page, recalling some comic capers on those earlier UK gigs, senses a cultural kinship between Brits and Canadians. "There's a certain faction of Canadians that clings for dear life to England," he says. "It's kind of the place that keeps us not being American. If we didn't have a fish and chip shop on the corner, or we weren't rushing home to see *Coronation Street*, we would be American."

Their ear for the absurdities of language has had audiences in this country in stitches as they played with newfound English phrases like toddlers in an Early Learning Centre. I remember them once constructing an entire song about Jaffa Cakes, and Page says they still get requests for it. "Whatever word happens to strike us, we play with," says drummer Tyler Stewart. "We talked about baps a lot, I remember. And slapper is one of our favourite words. We met these girls from Liverpool when we were there in 1996, I swear they were the original Spice Girls. They were so funny, drink you under the table, witty Scouse birds. They used this word slapper all the time."

"I think the biggest thing Canadians have in common with British people is that we both get embarrassed," says Page. "Americans just don't get embarrassed."

Page recalls the vexation of finding the acclaim for their shows in this country never translated into record sales, least of all in the Britpop era. "A song like *Brian Wilson* wasn't going to gel with *Song 2* by Blur," he says. "We felt really on the verge of something in the UK, but each record never quite hit it, and by the time the third record, *Born On A Pirate Ship*, came out, the ball was just dropped. We thought 'This is terrible, our chance has gone.'"

Their recent success is made more poignant by the current absence of keyboard player Kevin Hearn, now making a good recovery from leukaemia. "Now that he's recuperating, it's doubly frustrating for him that he can't be out here on tour with us," says Robertson. "It's a really hard thing when you feel like your career is at its pinnacle, but you're not celebrating it together."

The belated triumph of Barenaked Ladies is a tale of victory against the odds by a band that will not sit comfortably in any of the industry pigeonholes. "I like diversity in music, but it's hard to market," says Robertson. "There's so much music these days, everybody wants to be able to say what they're a cross between, like 'It's somewhere between U2 and Soul Coughing'. We are Herman's Hermits meets Henson's Muppets."

● *Barenaked Ladies play Shepherd's Bush Empire next Wednesday and the Forum, London N5, on Feb 13. The single* One Week *is released by Reprise on Feb 8, and the album* Stunt *on Feb 22. They will guest on the Beautiful South's UK arena tour in April*



After a decade of hard slog, Barenaked Ladies have finally cracked it big time in America. The drawback to this, though, is that they get pelted with macaroni cheese more often

Cutting edge

JAZZ ALBUMS

MICHEL PORTAL
Dockings
(Label Bleu LBLC 6604 HM 83)

THE multi-instrumentalist Michel Portal has always scorned genre boundaries, especially those between jazz and avant-garde classical music. A recent duo album with accordion player Richard Galliano, for instance, interspersed pieces by Astor Piazzolla and Hermeto Pascoal with Balkan folk; a 1995 album, *Cinemas*, embraced everything from orchestral tango to Maghrebi rhythms.

Here, with his front-line instruments augmented by Marcus Stockhausen's agile trumpet and propelled by the nervy but fluent piano of Bojan Zulfikaparsic, Portal casts his musical net as widely as ever. There are vigorously scuffling clarinet improvisations over Bruno Chevillon's lithe bass and Joey Baron's scurrying drums, intricate ensemble pieces redolent of North Africa, and a plangent waft though Carla Bley's *Ida Lupino*, featuring Steve Swallow on singing electric bass. Another rich, texturally adventurous album from one of Europe's most imaginative musicians.

JOHN CRITCHINSON QUARTET
Excuse Me, Do I Know You?
(Jazz House JHCD056)

HE WAS Ronnie Scott's pianist from 1979 until the latter's death in 1996, so John Critchinson's tribute to Scott is thoroughly imbued with respect for the late saxophonist's personal tastes, both musical and extra-musical.

Thus a vigorously interactive quartet, completed by saxophonist Pat Crumly, bassist Leon Clayton and drummer Mark Fletcher, visit some of Scott's playing favourites — *This Heart of Mine*, *Seven Steps to Heaven* — as well as performing originals in his favoured jazz styles, one of which — the title-track — memorialises one of Scott's more famous catchphrases.

With vocal appearances from Georgie Fame and Flora Purim, this album not only focuses the sadness caused by the death of one of jazz's most prominent musicians, but also honours the playing of some of its finest living practitioners.

CHRIS PARKER

Pale horse of a different dolour

NEW POP ALBUMS: It's being doomy and gloomy that makes Snowpony so cheering, says **David Sinclair**

SNOWPONY
The Slow-Motion World of Snowpony
(Radioactive RARD 11828 £15.99)

AS ANY half-decent alternative rock band led by a woman might expect these days, Snowpony have been optimistically compared with Garbage and P.J. Harvey. Singer and songwriter Katharine Gifford certainly has a dark, 1990s twist to her lyrics: "I used to dream in black and white, but now I dream in red," she sings in the macabre *3 can Keep a Secret (if 2 are Dead)*.

But the trio comprising former members of Stereolab, My Bloody Valentine and Moonshake — a sort of supergroup of glum — lacks the full-on approach of Garbage, and Gifford's glacial vocal delivery has little in common with Harvey's voodoo wail. Instead they combine some fairly conventional, chorus-free riffing with startling bursts of almost-discordant horn parts that are inserted into the arrangements of numbers such as *Bad Sister* and *Snow White* like a poker thrust into the embers of a fire.

Neat little shards of feedback stab into the fabric of *Easy Way Down* and a rogue sitar threads an erratic course through the dancey groove of *Titanic*, while a church bell tolls in the back of the mix.

"Why do I get these headaches?" Gifford sings in *St Lucy's Gate*, a woozy psychedelic interlude that sounds like a bad dream set to music. The question may be rhetorical, but rarely has the product of a sore head sounded this smart and imaginative.



If a migraine could sing, it would sound like Snowpony. Now there's an enticing prospect

CASSIUS
1999
(Virgin 7243 8 46701 £15.99)

FATBOY SLIM may be at No 1 this week, but the post-Christmas album chart is not otherwise overrun with dance acts, let alone French dance acts. However, like Air and Daft Punk, who were both successfully launched here at this time of year in 1998 and 1997 respectively, the Parisian duo Cassius are about to make a mainstream splash with their cunningly titled debut, *1999*.

Phillipe Zdar and Hubert "Boombass" Blanc-Francat are, at 31, veterans of the French dance scene. They have produced three albums for rap star MC Solaar, made their own hip hop records as La Funk Mob and remixed the biggest hits of both Daft Punk (*Around the World*) and Air (*Sexy Boy*). The pair call their music "urban electro funk", and their trick is to combine house beats with the sexier syncopations invented by James Brown, producing an accessible brand of dancefloor funk adroitly retooled for the rave generation.

They hit their stride midway through this album with *Mister Eveready*, *Nulife* and *Somebody*, a string of ingenious, minimalist grooves that have a simultaneously galvanising and hypnotic effect. Antique synthesizer sounds and feisty vocal chants pick out the melody line of *Club Soixante Quinze*, while the radio edit of their current hit single *Cassius 99*, with its Donna Summer sample, recalls the questionable thrill of 1970s disco, a style that has now been rehabilitated in a way that few people who actually lived through that era would previously have believed possible.

FOXY BROWN
Chyna Doll
(Def Jam/Mercury 558 933 £15.99)

OPENING with the (presumably simulated) sound of Foxy Brown being born, *Chyna Doll* is a broadly autobiographical album which spares the listener little in the way of detail. The rapper from Brooklyn is cursing, threatening and demanding respect almost before her feet have hit the ground, the only wrinkle in the plot being that the voice is that of a woman and not a man.

A succession of heavyweight stars, including the likes of Jay-Z, DMX and Memphis Bleek, are on hand to complement her vocal assets at strategic points throughout the album and she achieves a certain rough chemistry with her various partners on tracks such as *Bonnie & Clyde Part II* and *Can You Feel Me Baby*. But in the end it's all much too frightening to be sensual.

ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
The Dance Album
(The Hit Label AHLCD61 £15.99)

IF TOM JONES can become the acme of middle-aged cool (admittedly a few years ago now) and Cher can reinvent herself as a disco diva, then why not revive and recast Engelbert Humperdinck as the king of the 1990s dancefloor?

Well, there are 11 good reasons why not on *The Dance Album*, a collection of Humperdinck "favourites" including *Release Me*, *The Last Waltz* and *A Man Without Love*, together with various standards and one or two new songs, all set to a thumping, end-of-the-pier disco beat with predictably excruciating results.

As well as the three producers, there are another three people credited solely for coming up with the "original concept" for this album. Humperdinck is not the only one who needs to think again.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1	(3)	You've Come a Long Way, Baby	Fatboy Slim (Skint)
2	(1)	I've Been Expecting You	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
3	(2)	Ladies & Gentlemen - the Best of	George Michael (Epic)
4	(5)	Where We Belong	Boyzone (Polydor)
5	(4)	Talk on Corners	Corrs (Atlantic)
6	(6)	Step One	Steps (Jive)
7	(7)	Ray of Light	Madonna (Maverick)
8	(9)	Forgiven, Not Forgotten	Corrs (Atlantic)
9	(8)	The Best of 1980-1990	U2 (Island)
10	(10)	The Best of	M People (M People)

COPYRIGHT CIN ● *Figure in brackets indicates last week's position*

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★★★ Worth buying

A change of culture

A reconstructed IPC aims for a bold new future, says **Raymond Snoddy**

On a wall of Mike Matthew's 17th-floor office overlooking the Thames there are framed copies of ancient publications such as the *Strand Magazine* and *Titbits*, which were owned by IPC and its predecessors.

In a new corporate brochure produced by IPC, still the largest consumer magazine company in the UK, the titles are colour-matched according to age. Nine magazines have purple spots against them, indicating that they were launched before 1899, ranging from *Country Life*, *The Field* and *Shooting Times & Country Magazine* to *Amateur Photographer*, *Gardening*, and *Cycling Weekly*.

"I am a custodian really, just passing through," says 51-year-old Matthew, who has worked for IPC for the past 28 years.

the media interview

Propped against another wall is a board that is covered in handwritten paper stickers. It represents the magazine company's ambitions for the future — which include joining the FTSE 100 and launching a magazine every year that matches the triumph of *Loaded*, IPC's hugely successful title for young men.

Matthew does not know whether such things are possible but he is going to try over the next ten years. The "ambitions" board is just one aspect to a corporate makeover announced this month to make IPC more "fleet of foot" following last year's £860 million buyout from Reed Elsevier, the Anglo-Dutch information group.

During the last years of Reed ownership IPC felt like an unloved stepchild. Reed made no secret that it wanted to specialise in professional and business information — and that it was only a matter of time before IPC would be sold.

The issue came to a head when Matthew was refused permission to bid for *Telestar*, the French TV listings magazine — which is now owned by Emap, IPC's great rival in the magazine market.

Matthew, who was also unable to get the marketing budgets he thought he needed, saw it as the last straw and warned Reed that he planned to retire this year. He believes the potential loss of its chief executive, at the least, "crystalised" the decision to sell.

"I would have ended up presiding over the rise of IPC and its decline, and I wasn't prepared to manage decline," he says. Now Matthew, with the non-executive chairman David Arculus, who worked at Emap for many years, has drawn up his own plan for restructuring the company, which owns some of the UK's best-known magazines, including *Woman* and *Marie Claire* (in a joint venture), *Ideal Home* and *TV Times*.

"We have been a bit too business-orientated," says Matthew, "and a bit too control-freakish. We need to relax and to let a bit more creativity through. We are no longer constrained by Reed Elsevier. We can rewrite our culture."

Matthew entered the magazine industry as a junior in the copy department of George Newnes, later to become part of IPC Magazines. He had no qualifications other than what he calls "a sense of destiny" — a belief that he would not turn out to be average. The man who will be a multimillionaire when IPC floats on the Stock Exchange in two or three years was brought up in difficult circumstances in Sevenoaks, Kent, after his father, a motor mechanic, left when Matthew was eight. He still remembers the humiliation of standing up among classmates to get free school dinner tickets.

The IPC reconstruction, which will give its five divisions greater autonomy, has its darker side. About 200 jobs will go, many of them Matthew's senior colleagues. The first wave of eight have just departed. To achieve a flatter management structure, the role of editor-in-chief is going and there will be fewer publishers. In future, editors will report to their managing directors. The reality is that Iris Burton, the Editor-in-Chief of half the women's titles and a former Editor of both *Woman's Realm* and *Woman's Weekly*, is leaving — as is David Durman, the Editor-in-Chief of the other half. Another casualty is Andrew Taylor, the publisher of specific women's interest titles.

"Mike is bleeding on this. These are people he has worked with and probably employed," says Terry Mansfield, the managing director of the rival National Magazine Company. The closure of *Options*, though not part of the restructuring, could cost another 17 jobs.

Matthew denies that IPC, backed by the venture capital group Cin-Ven, overpaid for the company, thus leading to the redundancies.

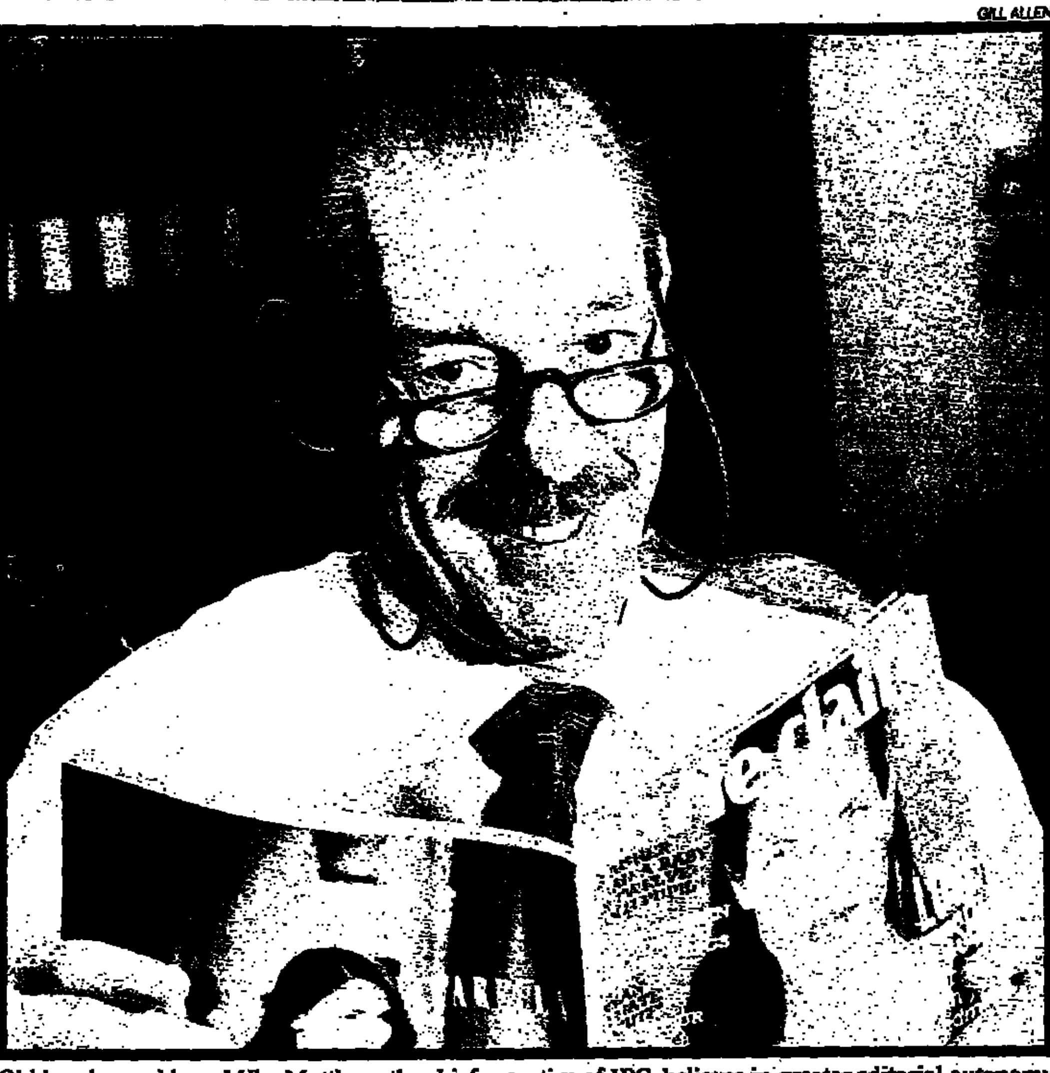
He accepts that IPC's circulation figures for the first half of last year were bad. The figures for the second half, out next month, will, he says, show that IPC is on the way back. Matthew believes he will have succeeded if in a year IPC is more dynamic and taking advantage of "the huge number of opportunities in the media market". These range from masthead publishing — TV shows linked to magazine titles — to magazine-related exhibitions and electronic publishing.

He makes no secret of the fact that he is looking for major acquisitions in the UK and would be interested in moving into business-to-business, or trade publishing.

Wouldn't it be lovely, he muses, if he was able to buy Reed Business Publishing or *New Scientist*, magazines that Reed Elsevier held on to.

He is not interested in reconstructing another part of IPC history — buying *The Mirror*, now the subject of takeover attempts. That would be too extraordinary an idea even for the pieces of paper on Matthew's strategic-intent board.

GILL ALLEN



Old hand, new ideas: Mike Matthew, the chief executive of IPC, believes in greater editorial autonomy

Mandi vacates Cosmo chair

TRADE

MANDI NORWOOD, the Editor of National Magazines's *Cosmopolitan*, has been promoted to Editor-in-Chief after turning down an offer from rivals IPC to edit *Marie Claire*. **Press Gazette** says that she will still oversee the day to day running of *Cosmo* but will also work on new titles. She will be replaced as Editor of *Cosmo*: among names being touted are Dawn Bebe, the former Editor of *New Woman*, Fiona McIntosh of *Elle* and Emma Soames, the Editor of the *Telegraph Magazine*.

■ A BAD year for the ad agency Ogilvy & Mather has culminated in the departure of Tom Bury, its chief executive and deputy chairman, says **Campaign**. Bury left after learning that he would not get the job of group chairman. During the past year, O & M has lost business worth millions of pounds from Guinness and BUPA and was replaced by Young & Rubicam as the main advertising agency for Ford in Europe.

■ BARCLAYS is reviewing the £30 million advertising account for its retail financial services, according to **Marketing Week**. At present the account is handled by J Walter Thompson, but other agencies will be invited to pitch. There has been upheaval at Barclays since the resignation last year of its chief executive, Martin Taylor, and the magazine says the review could lead to a new corporate identity and even a change of name.

■ THE BBC was the biggest winner at this week's annual production awards sponsored by **Broadcast**, winning six awards outright and sharing one. The docusoap *Hotel* beat *The Cruise* and *Airline* as the best popular factual programe. There were only two awards for ITV, both won by the same programme — *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* which was named as the best new programme and the best light entertainment.

■ CHANGING FACES: who's going where: Charles Courtier, James Sykes, Martin Thomas and Lea Gregory to head Media Edge Europe, Young & Rubicam's revamped European operation. All from other parts of Y & R (**Media Week**).

Greg Grimmer to be a managing partner at Optimedia, from CIA Medianetwork (**Campaign**).

Dave Atter, from Turner Entertainment, to be sales and marketing director for Beeb, the BBC's commercial Internet operation (**Marketing**).

Chris Wermann to be head of PR and Miles Russell public affairs manager for Direct Line; Wermann from Financial Dynamics, Russell from Burton-Marsteller; Roger Lowry moving to Burton-Marsteller after six years with the Liberal Democrats (**PR Week**).

Patrick Weever quits as deputy city editor of *The Sunday Telegraph* (**Press Gazette**).

■ MOVING HOUSE: who's getting the business:

Nationwide Building Society reviewing its £8 million account, at present with Leagas Delaney; Delaney Fletcher Bozell wins £2 million Harmony haircare account; BMP DDB to create a £1 million press campaign for Bentley cars, now owned by Volkswagen (**Campaign**).

The publisher Mills & Boon hires Band and Brown to handle its PR; the recruitment agency Office Angels engages the Red Consultancy to promote the brand (**PR Week**).

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

EXPRESS NEWSPAPERS / SIMON WALKER




manda Platell, left, was fired from *The Express on Sunday* by Rosie Boycott, Editor-in-Chief, right, after sales dipped below one million — and after running a contentious story on Peter Mandelson

No answer to the P45 question

Boycott has fired Platell from the *Express* but will she herself survive?

After the firing of Amanda Platell this week, *The Express on Sunday* has lost its fifth editor in s'ears, and the question that has be asked is how much moruffering a newspaper that only) years ago was the undisputechampion of Middle Englandan endure? If it was an anini we might spare its suffering d put it to sleep.

Plll fell out with Rosie Boyt, Editor-in-chief of *The Expn* and *The Express on Sunday*,ıst November when she pubhed a report about a friendship tween the former Cabinet Miner Peter Mandelson (a frien and neighbour of Boycott'and a Brazilian student in the ek in which Mandelson was ted as a homosexual.

Thruth of the row is difficult to eli but Platell believed that Boyc had sanctioned the story. Boyc believed that she had beenisled. What is not in doubt is th on the day of publication Marlson delivered a handwritten te to Boycott's home; that Lordollick, the *Express* proprietor d Labour life peer, made fouralls to the *Express* news-desk; and that the story was read to Mandelson, after which substantial cuts were made.

Three weeks later Platell read in *The Spectator* that her job had been offered to Sarah Sands, deputy editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, who had turned it down. Platell won a reprieve, partly because Paper Round pointed out that editors-in-chief ought to accept ultimate responsibility for what appears in their papers — but Platell's head has undoubtedly been on the block since then.

When the axe fell this week, it chopped not only Platell but also veteran news editor Ian Walker. Yesterday associate editor Andrew Pierce, one of the authors of the Mandelson story, also walked the plank. He announced his resignation at a conference, saying he was sick of seeing the Sunday paper rubbished and adding that the high morale on the Sunday paper would now plummet to the level on the daily.

Platell is under an oath of silence but her supporters insist that Mandelson had vowed he would destroy her career. Boycott's associates insist that Mandelson had nothing to do with the decision, as he has stated through his spokesman. The decision that she should go was made before the Mandelson saga, they say.

Brian MacArthur

Boycott is the boss and there is no doubt that she and Platell are different personalities who were bound to clash. Where Boycott is broadsheet, liberal, cerebral (a judge of this year's Whitbread Prize), Platell is a red-top tabloid veteran, an outgoing Aussie whom critics would say was over-promoted and the wrong editor for Boycott's *Express*.

Platell, moreover, was steering the Sunday paper in a different direction from the daily. Boycott has embarked on one of the most daring or foolhardy acts in tabloid history by surrounding herself with broadsheet journalists and transforming the once Tory and ultra-traditional Express into a New Age, new Labour newspaper for the new millennium. The P45 question is whether she can win enough new, younger readers without alienating the older readership.

Platell, meanwhile, ignored the evolution of the daily and — as her staff would put it — made the Sunday paper brighter, breezier and more fun to read. What that meant, as Boycott's deputy Chris Blackhurst told them yesterday, was that there was a "gulf in standards" between the daily and Sunday, his polite way of saying that Platell's paper was politically off-message and too vulgar.

Another nail in Platell's coffin was delivered when sales of *The Express on Sunday* slumped last month to a historic low of 973,000. *Express* conspiracy theorists say Boycott, seeking to worsen Platell's plight, cancelled the TV advertising for the Sunday title that would have kept sales above a million — and add that the *Express* TV ad campaign makes no mention of the Sunday.

Blackhurst and Michael Pilgrim now take the helm. Both worked with Boycott on *The Independent* and will need all the help they can get. *The Express on Sunday* has a staff of only 26 — compared with nearly 200 on *The Mail on Sunday* — and has suffered continual redundancies.

The cuts show at critical moments, such as 11pm last Saturday when the runaway foster parents Jeff and Jenny Bramley returned to Britain. Simon Walters, deputy editor, had to find a cash machine so that two remaining subs, due to finish their shift at midnight and catch the last train, could stay to finish the story and get home by cab. He paid the bill from his own pocket.

Sales this month are down 150,000 on a year ago. Within five years average issue readership has fallen from 4.7 million to 2.7 million. Advertising volume is down four per cent but up nearly four per cent for *The MoS*. Meanwhile *The MoS*, launched only in 1982, is selling nearly 2.3 million, up 130,000 on last year.

Seen from Boycott's chair, the logic of firing Platell is impeccable. The Sunday title will now be on-side and on-message. That, however, makes the pressure on her still greater. Since she took the chair last May, sales of *The Express* have fallen by 88,000. If her high-wire act is to succeed, which many doubt, she needs long-term commitment from Hollick and editorial stability.

The late Sir David English used to say that the instinct that made great editors worked for only one newspaper, that what made him a natural *Mail* Editor would not have worked for *The Sunday Times*. The tragedy for Rosie Boycott may be that a natural Editor of *The Independent on Sunday* (which she was) is not a natural Editor of *The Express*. Can she prove the cynics wrong?

Is Dyke the man to take over from Birt?

The Conservatives are preparing to raise the issue of "cronyism" if, as seems likely, Greg Dyke, the chairman of Pearson Television, emerges as a serious candidate to become the next Director-General of the BBC.

Mr Dyke, a multimillionaire from his days as chief executive of London Weekend Television, is a committed supporter of new Labour and one of a group, many with media connections, who sponsored the office of Tony Blair before the last election.

Peter Ainsworth, the Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, says that the job of Director-General of the BBC was so important that anyone who held the office should be "seen to be beyond reproach in political terms".

"I would advise the Chairman of the BBC to think very carefully about appointing anyone directly involved in sponsoring Mr Blair's office," says Mr Ainsworth.

The BBC is about to appoint headhunters to find a Director-General to replace Sir John Birt, who plans to leave in April 2000. The aim is to choose a candidate by the summer and to have that person in place by the autumn, to spend some time working in tandem with Sir John. The race is unusually open, with at least five internal and five external candidates.

Mr Dyke is attracting increasing attention because he is by nature an iconoclast with strong programme-making credentials and has a close relationship with Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC Chairman, from their days at LWT.

Dyke has not yet definitely made up his mind to "throw his hat in the ring", but even senior colleagues at Pearson concede privately that they would not stand in his way if the offer were made. The role of Director-General of the BBC is still seen as one of the plum jobs in world broadcasting.

It is unlikely that the Governors of the BBC would automatically rule out Mr Dyke because of his political connections. After all, Sir Christopher is a former Conservative local councillor and former chairman of the Conservative Bow Group. The issue would be whether Mr Dyke would be prepared to renounce his overt political support for new Labour. It is believed that he did not contribute to Labour Party funds while he was a broadcaster at LWT.

Friends say that if Mr Dyke decided to stand for the post, his aim would be to simplify the BBC bureaucracy and to give greater encouragement to programme-makers.

Before joining LWT in 1987, Mr Dyke, who started his career as a local newspaper reporter in West London, was director of programmes at TVS and editor-in-chief at TV-am, the commercial breakfast station. Both TV-am and TVS lost their licences in the 1991 tenders for new ITV franchises.

RAYMOND SNODDY

The death of L!ve is on the cards



WDEVER wins the battle for *Mirror Group Newspapers*, it is thought unlikely thaLive TV will survive, or tha new *Sporting Life* will go read. By shutting down Liv media experts reckon thathe group would save beten £8 million and £10 miln a year, while the most like purchaser, Chris Oakley, a former director of MC, has always been sceptical out starting up a new naial sports paper.

L! TV, that peddler of wac programming immortalis in the BBC documentary *'ightmare at Canary Whi*, has failed as a local cabletelevision network, but it has cainly become a brand. Perhs it could survive as a nich-nadcap national channel? as agreements with the cablndusiry — guaranteeing a bedrock income — havenly five years to run, and great inspirer, Kelvin Macenzie, is pouring his energyito Talk Radio. Surely somne will give the News Buni hutch space?



Haroday, gone tomorrow?

■ A: THIS uncertainty aboutL!ve helps to explain why lacKenzie was able to attra Nick Ferrari, L!ve's form director of programes, across to Talk Radio, to sit at a studio microphone alongside the breakfast presenter David Banks.

Makers of television documentaries ought to be banging down the doors at Talk, for Kelvin is still up to his old tricks. As reported here last week, Carole Stone, a former producer of *Any Questions* on Radio 4, was invited to oversee its new Thursday night debate. But by Friday evening, after receiving a telephone call from Kelvin, she had backed off from further involvement in the project, murmuring the words: "Interesting, instructive."

She had thought that MacKenzie wanted serious discussions about, say, the euro. What he really had in mind was such topics as "why Sean Connery is moving back to Scotland from Spain", and celebrity panelists.

He is displaying a touching faith in his power to turn tabloid journalists into broadcasters: Jane Moore, the *Sun* columnist currently being tried out as a co-presenter with Scott Chisholm, moves next week to a new show, *My Favourite Year*, which consists of an interview with a celebrity, interspersed with news clips and music from the year in question. The format was devised by Kelvin's journalist daughter, Kiershen.

■ FOR THE first time BBC News has introduced compulsory redundancies among its senior current affairs producers, and up to 17 face the chop. The reason: the television service, which is already winning battles to make daily news more accessible, has taken its revenge over the boring quality of most specialist weekly current affairs series on law, housing and education that were once so loved by Sir John Birt.

Staff at the television service were able to act because guaranteed funding has been removed by BBC News and nobody else would pick up the tab. Of the roster, only *Black Britain* survives. Instead, the BBC News chief executive, Tony Hall, is setting aside £1 million for special topical programmes, such as the current *Inside the Lords* on BBC2. The inside view is that arrogant BBC News executives took too little notice of their critics, believing that as they were producing public service programming, they would be safe.

The bigger point is a serious one: if the BBC does not produce programmes on social policy issues, then nobody else will either.

■ QUIET celebrations are under way at *The Observer*. The newspaper, the only Sunday broadsheet to register a rise in sales in December, has moved back above the psychologically important target of 400,000 this month, touching 430,000 last week. This was despite efforts by the *Independent on Sunday* to spike *The Observer's* revamp by cutting its own cover price to 50p.

Roger Alton, the Editor of *The Observer*, says: "We've got some great people here, I just hope to keep it up." He adds: "My biggest challenge is to keep traditional readers while appealing to the new."

The Independent's Editor-in-Chief, Simon Kelner, in part of a wider shake-up across both titles, has reacted by sending across his right-hand man, Tristan Davies, to work alongside the *IOS* Editor, Kim Fletcher, the former deputy editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, on some form of swift redesign.

■ HE WHO pays the piper calls the tune? This thought popped into my head at the launch of *Public Purposes in Broadcasting: Funding the BBC*, a grand event at Carlton House Terrace, where eight of Britain's leading economists gave brief resumes of their worthy contributions to the sponsored book.

Funnily enough none of them fundamentally questions the existence of the licence fee, or threatens to keep the BBC Chairman Sir Christopher Bland awake at night. The fees paid by the BBC for each chapter? Some £5,000 to £10,000.

■ CAMELOT is about to renew its agreement with the BBC to screen the National Lottery. I hear that Bazal Productions, which won the competition to supply a new programme starting in six weeks' time, will now run the draw at the beginning. But it ran into trouble over plans to roll the balls one by one to settle bones of contention between people: eg, should a neighbour's overhanging trees be cut down?

But Camelot has been dazzled by the success of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* and hopes that the producer, Celador, will come up with an even better look after Bazal's 13-show run ends.

■ ROWAN ATKINSON is being wooed to bring back his Blackadder character for the Millennium Experience. But I hear that his production company, Tiger Aspect Productions, is less than thrilled. First, at the leak and, secondly, at the prospect that its hottest property, having conquered Hollywood, should be sidetracked to save the Dome.



Millennium man? Rowan Atkinson as Blackadder

media times

Anatomy of a hoax

C4 has made a programme on the couple who duped it, writes **Carol Midgley**



The "father" and "daughter" of *Daddy's Girl*, Stuart Smith and Victoria Greetham: "The film-makers could easily have blown my cover," says Smith

IF two people had wasted £40,000 of your budget and several weeks of your time playing a spectacularly humiliating practical joke, what would you do? Report them to the police? Devote your life to sending taxis and pizza delivery boys to their front door? Or smile, forgive and say "shucks, it happens"?

Channel 4, with incredible *magnanimity*, seems to have opted for the last approach. Five months after a couple exposed the channel to ridicule by pretending to be father and daughter for the documentary *Daddy's Girl*, executives have not only kissed and made up with the pair, but made yet another film about them.

Daddy's Girl never saw the light of day. It was withdrawn hours before transmission after the girl's real father happened to see the programme trailer and alerted Channel 4 to the ruse. Excerpts from it, however, have been interwoven into Channel 4's latest offering, *Who's Been Framed?*, which pioneers a hitherto unexplored area of programme-making — the anatomy of the in-house cock-up.

During an hour-long *mea culpa*, Stuart Smith, 29, and Victoria Greetham, 19, explain how they hoodwinked the television crew for more than four months. Smith, who had pretended to be 39 and intensely possessive of his "daughter", says the hoax fulfilled a fantasy. "It felt good to be a middle-class racehorse trainer instead of a plumber's son with a criminal record," he says. "I swapped lives."

Greetham, a law student and aspiring model, displays a naive, insouciant attitude to a prank that could have cost the director, Edmund Coulthard, of Blast! films, his career. "Not everything you see on TV is real," she says. "The documentary that was made was real, it's just that there were some lies involved in it."

The hoax did, however, raise important questions about the future of the genre. Michael Jackson, the chief executive of Channel 4, said the episode was a new public abuse of the trust that once existed between film-makers and their subjects. Directors agree that, from now on, nobody will be taken at face value; subjects will be vetted right down to their birth certificates, and "good faith" is *history*.

Others say that such a hoax was waiting to happen. The public's appetite for fame had been dangerously whetted by watching ordinary people become overnight celebrities thanks to the success of docusoaps such as *Driving School* and *The Cruise*.

But will making a documentary about a documentary, and committing more money to two subjects who have already shown themselves to be frauds, expose Channel 4 to accusations of excessive navel-gazing? After all, why should we believe the word of two proven liars the second time round?

The commissioning editor, Peter Dale, says: "We are not trying to make this a moral tale. That would seem self-congratulatory. We're trying to look at how the public sees us now. This is part of the tables turning. The power is shifting. We are no longer like gods commanding the public to do what we want them to do, and this was a good way of exploring this change in attitude.

"To some extent people now see broadcasters as a means to an end rather than purveyors of nIertainment. They can use us to become famous. If it makes us more vigilant, that is not a bad thing."

> 'Perhaps we believe a story because we want it to be true'

The hoax has also fuelled the argument that the docusoap is now a spent force. Ordinary Joes have been exploited to the point where it has all blown up in television's face.

Smith says he could easily have been found out: "They could have blown my cover. There is a book that lists all the trainers and they could have found out that I didn't exist."

In one scene of Daddy's Girl, included in the new programme, Stuart fights with Victoria's "boyfriend" after a night out. The undertone is that he seems to be incestuously obsessed with his daughter which, in ratings terms, is almost too good to be true.

With the benefit of hindsight it is easy to blame sloppy research or poor judgment, but such a sophisticated con, involving dozens of people, would probably convince most of us. When the hoax emerged Greetham gave *The Daily Telegraph*'s reporter a mobile phone number for her real father to obtain a comment. It turned out to be another ruse — she had actually given them Smith's number and he supplied "outraged" quotes as if he were the real father.

Peter Moore, who commissioned the film for Channel 4, admits that the hoax angered and embarrassed him, but concedes: "Perhaps sometimes we believe the story presented to us because we so want it to be true."

During the programme Smith tells us he and Greetham have split up. He has lost his job at a Huddersfield pub but does not regret the scam: "I get a kick out of this and it keeps me off drugs."

Peter Dale says the film gives an insight into a man so desperate for fame and an escape from the mundanity of life that he went to these lengths. "When you get behind the façade you see quite a troubled man," he says. "He felt he was living out some kind of scheme to show that he would have been an achiever if he had been given another life."

● Cutting Edge: Who's Been Framed? *is on February 1 at 9pm.*

Welcome to the real-life Corrie St

Maureen Paton reports on Newsnight's new docusoap

The stock of the docusoap has never been lower. And although a recent *BBC Choice* documentary asked whether ratings-hungry broadcasters had gone a docusoap too far in depicting, and sometimes distorting, real people's lives, BBC2's *Newsnight* has emerged as a surprise player in this field.

As part of the first revamp in its 19-year history, the programme has introduced a docusoap about a run-down, crime-ridden area of Salford in Greater Manchester. The commentary is being voiced by Jeremy Paxman, *Newsnight*'s best-known presenter, ensuring an instantly recognised name for a television experiment that will run for two years.

Salford City Council decided it would co-operate with *Newsnight* on the warts-and-all docusoap, *Real Estates*, as the area's image is already so negative that, as the council's public relations chief admits, it has little to lose from the exposure. What we will be seeing is a real-life *Coronation Street*.

> 'I would hope that it becomes required viewing for politicians'

Tenants from the tatty (privately owned) Langworthy estate, whose rooftops are featured during the opening credits of the long-running Granada TV soap, and those from nearby Ordsall (a council-owned estate) will live under the glare of the cameras for the next 24 months in an effort to test the effect of government initiatives on the lives of the underprivileged.

With 15-minute snapshots of their lives broadcast in fortnightly or monthly segments, a group of families — ranging from hard-pressed single mothers to vulnerable pensioners — are likely to become almost as familiar to viewers as the characters from *The Street*.

The production team behind *Real Estates*, Sandra Jones and Pam Giddy, are aiming for the grittiness of a Ken Loach film but without the preordained agenda. Feedback from the first screening last month, in which families were interviewed about their living conditions, was positive. The second instalment of *Real Estates*, broadcast last week, dealt with residents' fears of burglary, and coincided with *Newsnight's* lead item about Jack Straw's "three strikes and you are out" burglary policy.

Further reports will be regularly slotted into the *Newsnight* format, with the schedule being dictated an extent by the content *Newsnight*.

"We wanted to track t effect that Government is g ing to have on the wh community," says Si Kevill, the Editor of *New night*. "Only by pursuing over the long term will y see whether government p icy makes a difference and the length of the proj makes it unique to a news programme. I wou hope that it becomes quired viewing for pol cians. It will certainly s them from having to c vene a few focus groups.

"One could call this a re life soap in the sense that p ple's stories will unfold a you will want to know w happens next. We'll be t ing advice about whether identify minors, for instan But we aim to do everyth as openly as possible."

By the use of inexpens digital video cameras a natural light, the costs h been absorbed into *Ne night*'s annua million budge

Carol La Salford couns head of com nications public relat says: "Salf national im is so poor th decided we ven't got n to lose. In we've got a lo gain. I was impressed b time they re prepared to vote to the project, whi is so different from the u al way that the media pa chute in and out of an a."

She also realised at *Newsnight* will, in effe be monitoring an ambitiou r ban regeneration stra y that includes the £123 il lion Lowry Arts Ce e, which will open this ye

Despite the risk of at ct ing scare stories about e fits drones, or worse, J es believes that *Newsni* 's long-term approach wil t into context the kind of v erty trap that keeps a s le mother of three, An a Gaffey, 26, on the do t £105 a week.

She will be feature Thursday's episode of *R l Estates*, which will focu single mothers. Her mo in giving unpaid time to camera is simple: "I w the world to see that pe like us don't deserve area. This is how my b may end up — and it sca me."

Jones and Giddy, says, always ring in vance to "give me time put some make-up on". It mains to be seen how tru fully the cameras can ref reality without heighten the drama.

media watch

THE latest national newspaper circulation figures, for July to December 1998, show that the *Financial Times* continues to perform more strongly than the rest of the market — up by 11.6 per cent, or 38,000 copies year on year.

All of the other national broadsheets lost circulation, apart from *The Sunday Times*, which managed to hold fairly steady at 1.3 million copies per issue.

Sales of *The Daily Telegraph* are slipping back towards the million mark, down by 44,022, year on year, to 1.05 million. *The Times* dropped 40,000 to 752,000.

Sunday Business, which at present has a monthly audit, was down 3,054 in December, compared with November, to 47,632 copies.

Only the two *Mail* titles are matching the *FT's* progress. The *Daily Mail* gained 112,415 copies; *The Mail on Sunday* was up 92,899.

The Express continues to suffer badly, this time dropping 7 per cent year on year. Its recent TV ad campaign, created by St Luke's (its third agency in a year), is unlikely to reverse the decline. *The Express on Sunday* is also in the doldrums, down by 113,279 copies. To add to the gloom, Express Newspapers this week removed the Sunday paper's Editor, Amanda Platell, and dismissed its news editor, Ian Walker, citing poor sales as the reason.

The Mirror is the only popular tabloid to report an *increase in its circulation* — up by 13,940 to 2.34 million. However, the Sunday red-tops did not fare so well: the *Sunday Mirror* shed 287,510 in sales; the *News of the World*, still the biggest seller, fell by more than 200,000 copies, and the *Sunday* ople lost 177,844 copies.

● *MediaTel's online edia information and analy serv-ice is accessed via the I rnet at http://www.mediat o.uk (0171-439 7575).*

ABC YEAR ON YEAR COMPARISONS

TITLE	JUL '97 - DEC '97	JUL '98 - DEC '98	ACTUAL CHANGE	% CHA E
Daily Mail	2,237,949	2,350,364	112,415	5
Daily Star	712,182	646,314	-65,868	-9
Daily Telegraph	1,098,440	1,054,418	-44,022	-4
Express	1,202,291	1,118,700	-83,591	-7
Express On Sunday	1,140,328	1,027,049	-113,279	-9
Financial Times	328,793	366,969	38,176	11
Guardian	403,999	391,919	-12,080	-3
Independent	260,223	221,398	-38,825	-14
Independent On Sunday	287,543	253,907	-33,636	-11
Mail On Sunday	2,219,430	2,312,329	92,899	4
Mirror	2,324,109	2,338,049	13,940	0
News of the World	4,425,708	4,225,599	-200,109	-4
Observer	439,573	398,983	40,590	-9
Sun	3,779,605	3,675,286	-104,319	-2
Sunday Mirror	2,276,089	1,988,579	-287,510	-12
Sunday People	1,895,121	1,717,277	-177,844	-9
Sunday Telegraph	887,204	829,032	-58,172	6
Sunday Times	1,343,324	1,349,925	6,601	0
Times	792,151	751,862	-40,289	-5
TOTAL	28,054,062	27,017,959	-1,036,103	-3



BBC

The starry-sky logo, a new promotion campaign and updated jingles are part of Mark Byford's drive to give the World Service a global identity, which is instantly recognisable

A 'brand' new World Service

The BBC is giving its overseas output a new global image. But will this rebranding destroy its diversity? **Meg Carter** reports

The BBC World Service may broadcast to the world — for the time being at least — but is it a global brand? This is the conundrum puzzling BBC managers and fuelling the latest roundabout proposals for further programme cuts.

The BBC says the service must be more "listener-focused" more commercially competitive and better promoted internationally to survive. But is the corporation right?

Observers were quick to condemn last weekend's leaks of further programming cuts. Denying the reports, Mark Byford, the World Service chief executive, penned his defence in a letter to *The Guardian*, swearing the BBC's commitment to ongoing efficiency savings and some reprioritisation to maintain World Service's position as the world's leading international broadcaster".

What he didn't say, however, was that this "reprioritisation" is well advanced. Managers are already rebranding and repositioning the service, with several key developments introduced this month.

There is a new logo — a starry night-sky motif — developed by the designers Lambie-Nairn as part of a unified approach to promoting the English-language service and the 43 local-language services that the World Service broadcasts. A promotional campaign is being developed by the advertising agency Leagas Delaney, and a company will be appointed soon to update on-air promotions and jingles.

A branded breakfast-show format, *The World Today*, is being rolled out across the World Service's three regional English-language zones. This means that listeners in America/Europe, Africa and Asia/Pacific will soon hear the same news-show format, although it will be produced and scheduled regionally. Other parts of the English-language output will be similarly reformatted.

All of this is an investment to ensure future audiences, BBC managers say. But is it?

"The most important thing is programming, not packaging," one longstanding World Service producer laments. "Any attempt to refocus resources, such as cutting foreign language output, is an attempt to narrow the World Service's output and will dilute the role it plays."

With the World Service directly funded by the Foreign Office, its traditional and unique role in promoting objective news and British values should be sacrosanct, many believe. Yet plans are said to be afoot to cut services attracting low or falling audiences.

John Tusa, the former managing director of the World Service, says: "Just because you're sixth out of eight [in terms of listeners] in the Far East doesn't mean you are not important. Unless you have a total view of how the English service fits with local-language services you cannot draw sensible conclusions. There is some evidence that where both English and local-language services are available, total World Service listening is greater."

On one level, the logic of refocusing the World Service seems sound. Much has changed since it was launched in 1932. Competition between news providers has increased and the BBC has launched several international commercial television services, including BBC Choice and BBC World.

"Every broadcaster must work harder to compete for audiences now," says Alan Booth, the controller of marketing and communication for the World Service. "We have to be more responsive to listeners' needs." To achieve this, he co-ordinated a strategic review of the service's image and perceived role.

"We found that there was no clear or consistent understanding of the World Service brand," he says. One reason for this was that the service was referred to and promoted locally in a variety of ways. Perceptions of the World Service also vary. Many listeners relied on it as an impartial provider of accurate news, others viewed it primarily as an educational tool, while for many more it provided a welcome reminder of home.

"Our brief," says Liz Dunning, the marketing director of Lambie-Nairn, "was to develop a more coherent World Service brand. You build strong global brands by having just one way of saying Coca-Cola is Coca-Cola, or Marlboro is Marlboro." To this end, BBC World Service is being promoted, from this month, as "the world's reference point" — visually depicted by stars in a night sky.

Sceptics, however, remain unconvinced that this approach is appropriate. "BBC World Service is a global brand already," Tusa says. "That's not to say it is seen in the same way all over the world. In each area where it is received, it means something different to local audiences. But this is a strength, not a weakness. They are looking at the brand in exactly the wrong sort of way."

Critics also question whether this approach can work if investment in programming — particularly the foreign-language output, which 100 million of the World Service's 134 million listeners currently tune in to — is reduced.

Exact details of how funding will be allocated over the next three years are expected in two weeks. But the steps that have already been taken towards unifying, standardising and publicising English-language output provide a grim indication of how the service's emphasis will change.

Film industry cries out for fresh script

A sensible person would not hold their breath waiting for the Government to do much to boost the UK's film and television industry. The most that can be expected in a good year is a modest tax concession.

Even film industry quangos, recycling public money in one way or another, do not have a sparkling record when it comes to backing potential hits. They seem irresistibly attracted to turkeys.

But symbolism and a little loving care can help. Yesterday Brian Wilson, the Trade Minister, set off for America on a trip around the British outposts of film and television.

He will be the first minister from the Department of Trade and Industry to visit the British Film Office in Los Angeles, set up after a recent review of film policy. Next week he will visit the National Association of Television Program Executives exhibition in New Orleans, the largest television trade fair in the world, which is attended by delegates from more than 90 countries. Seventy-six UK companies will be showing their wares there.

Raymond Snoddy

This ministerial attention for one of the UK's growth industries is welcome. Even more welcome is the fact that 70 of those companies received DTI grants to attend. Wilson recognises, however, that he has no magic wand to wave but at least his presence, interest and willingness to learn are encouraging.

For all the talk of the UK being a world-class player in film and television, the harsh reality is that in 1997 exports totalled a relatively modest £1.2 billion. In spite of the occasional Oscar, quality television and language advantage, the UK industry still had a trade deficit of £272 million.

The Government can help mainly in practical areas such as strengthening copyright and trying to boost exports. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is trying to simplify the process of encouraging the film industry by putting together a single film industry body, although it is taking its time.

There are a few hopeful signs of progress in the industry. This week Carlton Communications strengthened its television and film library with the $150 million (£89 million) purchase of the ITC library, containing everything from *The Saint* to *On Golden Pond*, from Universal Studios.

And the BBC is now making progress in the United States with its BBC America channel, while children's programme-makers such as Hit Entertainment and Britt Allcroft are taking their shows around the world. Pearson has also just sold a new science-fiction-cum-X Files series to the American networks.

The UK's commercial broadcasters, many believe, have been far too timid and insular when it comes to making programmes for world markets, particularly the US. They have been busy fighting parochial battles against each other and the BBC, and are only just beginning to see the international possibilities.

Companies such as Pearson have become thoroughly international through the purchase of programme-makers such as Grundy and All American. But Pearson's great weakness is that is does not own any broadcasters apart from its stake in Channel 5.

The "content is king" cliché may hold true to an extent, but surely content and distribution are better. This is where the Government can help. Modest relaxation in broadcasting and merger rules would allow the creation of weightier British media companies that could tackle world markets, reverse the television and film deficit and prove that the British industry really is first-class, not only in prestige and honours but in sales as well.

Ali doesn't belong in ads



IS NONE OF our heroes safe? First, John Lennon appears in the One 2 One campaign alongside Chris Evans; now comes Muhammad Ali for the Equitable Life. The difference is, of course, that Ali finally agreed to appear in one of the countless ads he has been offered, and Lennon had no choice.

There is no doubt that it's a coup to land Ali. His mere appearance demands the viewer's attention — as did Henry Kissinger's presence in a recent *Economist* ad. Make no mistake, it is stunning to see Ali on the screen — in the past and, more painfully, in the present. Asked by a little boy basketball player what he would be if he weren't a boxer, the fresh-faced Ali of all our yesterdays answers, by way of old footage: "If I was a garbageman, I'd be the greatest garbage man in the world. I'd be the greatest whatever I'd have done."

Cut to the present and a slower, sadder Ali cruises around in the back of a limo with onlookers standing starstruck in the street. The ad ends with the basketball player trying to punch Ali, but the great boxer holds him at arm's length. The end frame says "Anything's possible when it's an Equitable Life". But by then who's paying attention? I was so dumbstruck by Ali's reduced state that I was immune to the advertiser.

The ad sets your mind spinning in all directions, none of them towards Equitable Life. It's not hairs-standing-up-on-the-back-of-your-neck emotional; not quite positive enough to make you empathise with the idea that you can retire and still be the greatest. It may be because the soundtrack is prosaic, or that the director tries too hard to be clever. But where my head spun was towards my Ali memories and what they evoke about my younger self. I couldn't then make the leap to the Equitable Life.

If Muhammad Ali is in a commercial, it should be really special, and this just isn't. It may be that our heroes should be allowed to rest in their youthful glory, deep within the recesses of our minds.

So here's a plea to admen everywhere: lay off J.P.R. Williams and Ian Botham; Debbie Harry and David Bowie; Peter O'Toole and Julie Christie. Most of all, never use so much as a frame of Peter Lorimer — unless it's from the early Seventies, of course.

■ MARKS & SPENCER has never advertised consistently, at least not like its rivals. A £3-million-a-year-ish budget is a quarter of that of the likes of C&A and Debenhams, and a tenth in some years of what Sainsbury's and Tesco spend.

M&S never believed it had to. Its ubiquitous presence on the high street, and unswerving commitment to high standards and value-for-money products, have defined a different type of marketing strategy.

The former management, under Sir Richard Greenbury, could hardly countenance advertising, and certainly not on television. M&S's image had been so unimpeachable for so long that any association with the black art was deemed counter-productive. And in a company where running out of stock is a crime, the danger with advertising is that it can work too well.

Even real positives — the behind-the-scenes role of such designers as Paul Smith, and the great improvements in the quality of ranges such as men's suits — were kept quiet. Still, the occasional campaigns for strawberries in summer or a new range of underwear could clear shelves overnight. Ironically, even the three-night flirtation with television at Christmas resulted in record footfall.

The truth is that M&S has always been a buying-led, not marketing-led, company. This autumn the buyers got it wrong. Now the new chief executive, Peter Salsbury, has appointed a 29-year M&S veteran, Peter Benfield, as its first marketing director for UK retail. Benfield's role was planned long before the sales slump and profits warning, but it would be naive not to believe that recent events have highlighted M&S's reactionary approach to marketing. This was relatively harmless when it was unchallenged as Britain's best retailer, particularly in food. But the competition has improved. Nobody can afford to be out-marketed — just look at how Tesco has stolen a march over Sainsbury's.

In 1999 it seems perverse to write about a retailer as sophisticated as M&S having to embrace marketing. Few doubt that, once it does, it will profit hugely and wonder what it was scared of all those years.



Past glory: the slower, sadder Ali

● *Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of* Campaign.

EDUCATION

EASTER REVISION

EDUCATION

POSTS

COURSES

POSTS

BUSINESS COURSES

SCHOLARSHIPS

مأخوذ من الأصل

A lesson from church schools

Tony Blair has sent his children to Roman Catholic schools for good reason, argues **Tony Mooney**

Cherie and Tony Blair had cause for quiet satisfaction when the GCSE league tables were published last month. The London Oratory, the school attended by their two sons Euan and Nicky, was named as the eighth most improved secondary school in England over the past three years.

As a school with 88 per cent of its pupils obtaining five GCSE passes at grade C or above, the Oratory again emphasised the academic advantages of a Roman Catholic education.

Now it has been announced that the Blairs' daughter Kathryn will also attend a Catholic school, in Hammersmith. Yet critics claim that these advantages are not real and that the apparently superior results are the result of covert selection. So how does one find out whether Catholic schools offer a better standard of education than their state counterparts?

Surprisingly, there has been little independent research into the topic in Britain. However, one study in 1990 did analyse the differences in examination performance of secondary schools in the former Inner London Education Authority. It found that after taking background factors into account, "the examination performance of students attending Roman Catholic schools is higher than those of students attending county schools".

Another clue comes from the Chief Inspector of Schools. Since his inspectors have started to name very good and excellent schools, the growing list looks as if it has been obtained from a Vatican education propaganda booklet.

The Americans have been more systematic in their analysis of the value of Catholic schools. Researchers at the University of Michigan followed more than 3,000 students from 184 high schools and found that Catholic schools, despite not having students who were advantaged culturally, economically or academically, were pushing them harder in mathematics than other types of school. A greater percentage of pupils took high-level maths courses and this was consistent across the ability range, suggesting that Catholic schools are "especially equitable in who completes advanced course work".

A large-scale inquiry into the early-school and post-school records of about 60,000 students in more than 1,000 high schools found that Catholic schools were performing much better on a number of fronts than their state counterparts. This was despite the fact that they had less money and fewer well-paid teachers who taught larger classes of pupils who were mainly from the more difficult areas.

> There is greater potential for social control

The study found that it was the most disadvantaged students (blacks, Hispanics and those from low socio-economic backgrounds) who were most likely to profit from attending Catholic secondary schools. Pupils with discipline problems were likely to benefit even more from their education than those who were well behaved. This was probably because the Catholic schools contained their discipline problems without resorting to expulsions at the same rate as state schools.

But why are Catholic schools so successful in educating young people? Dr Andrew Morris, the deputy executive secretary of the Diocesan Schools Commission in Birmingham, offered some reasons in the journal *Research Papers in Education*, also drawing on recent doctoral research undertaken at Warwick University.

Dr Morris argues that Catholic schools have an inbuilt advantage because of the coherence and distinctiveness of the community they serve. Parental attitudes, lifestyle, manner of speaking and thinking are all "consonant with the school and there is, therefore, a process of mutual reinforcement".

According to Dr Morris, it is the strength of teacher commitment to schools that makes them such places of academic excellence. Roman Catholic teachers who go out of their way to work in Catholic schools will often see the school as a religious community and their "self-image and level of commitment may be enhanced and a virtuous circle established".

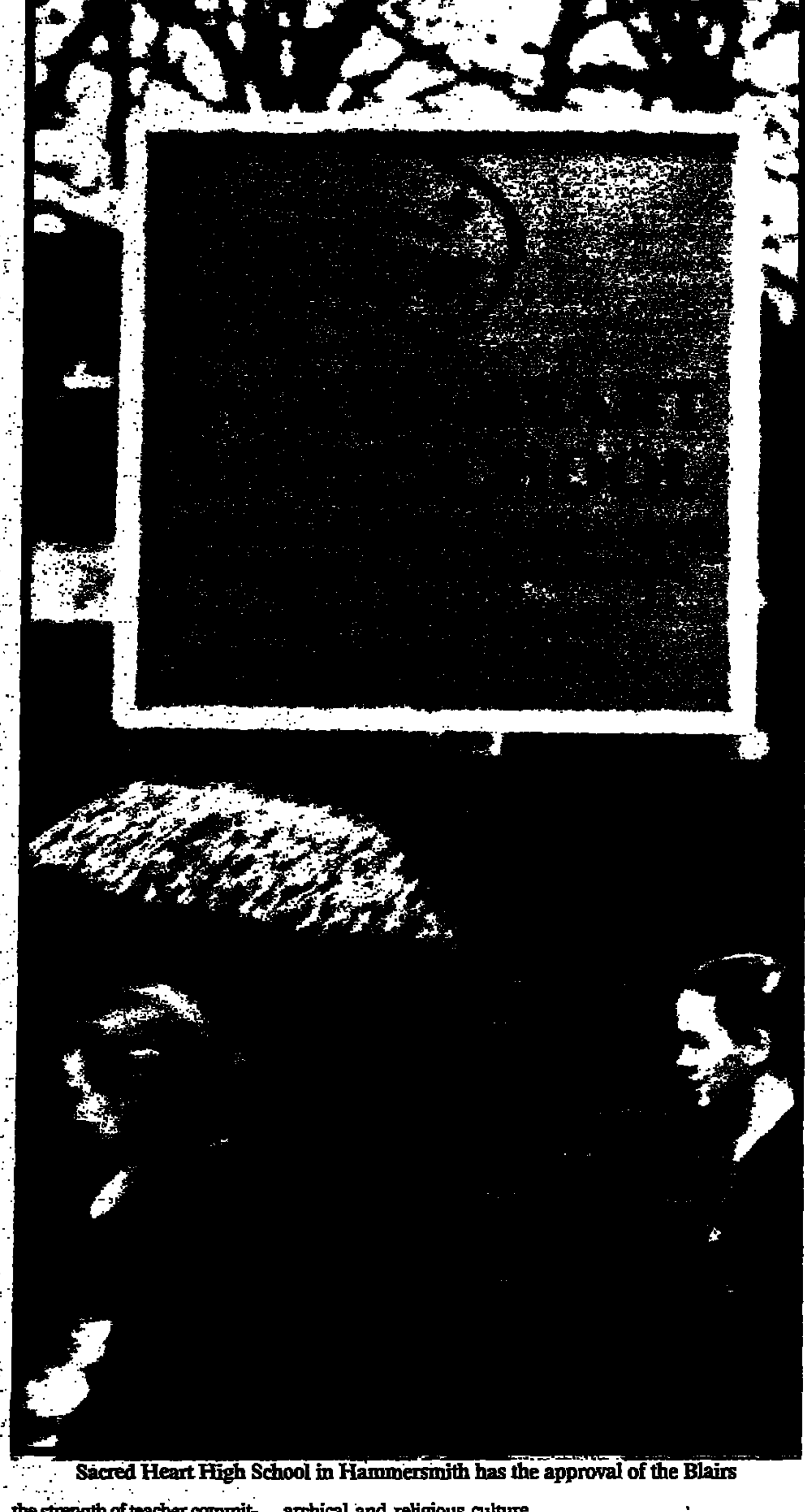
The expectations of its teachers by the Catholic Church also play a part in the creation of teaching excellence. Catholic teachers are expected to give affection, respect and service to their pupils beyond that required by educational law or other caring professions.

Another feature is good discipline. Dr Morris believes that this emanates from several sources. The fact that Catholic schools operate within a hierarchical and religious culture gives both parents and teachers greater potential for social control. "As such," he adds, "it helps to create a climate of conformity that is likely to assist academic achievement."

Student ease within Catholic schools may also come from the knowledge that in the light of Christian doctrines, "transgression of school norms, if acknowledged and repented, will not necessarily result in being ostracised". This is why questions of discipline and possible exclusion from Catholic schools causes so much angst to those who have to make the decisions.

There is little debate in Britain on why Catholic schools are academically and socially effective. Government-sponsored research would not be wasted — the knowledge acquired might be of value in improving all schools.

RAY RILEY



Sacred Heart High School in Hammersmith has the approval of the Blairs

First crack in the fees ceiling

The university fee regime which has prompted a group of Oxford students to risk glittering academic careers without the slightest prospect of advancing their cause may seem positively benign a few years from now. Those who cautioned that £1,000 a year would be the thin end of a much larger wedge seem certain to be proved right before long.

Having found that the demand for places has easily withstood the introduction of fees, the leading universities are looking forward to a relaxation of the Government's £1,000 limit. Oxford's business school plans for a degree costing up to £15,000 a year may be at the extreme end of the continuum, but for those competing in the world market, the present fee income is a drop in the ocean.

Rethinking Higher Education, a pamphlet published today by the Institute for Economic Affairs, makes the case for a sharp increase in the student contribution to the cost of higher education. Professor Thomas Lange, director of the Centre for Labour Market Studies at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, questions the need for even the current size of the university system, let alone further expansion. He argues that more of the financial burden should fall on the students because they benefit most.

John O'Leary

Professor Lange's case rests partly on contentious and dated calculations on the rate of return to individuals and the State from higher education. They suggest that because of the level of public spending, the economic benefit to the UK is less than in countries such as America and France. The advantage to the individual is also less than in most developed nations, but it is higher than the "social return".

More recent attempts at the same exercise have suggested that the gap between private and social benefits has narrowed greatly. With the abolition of grants and the advent of tuition fees, it is safe to assume that there will be little difference in years to come: if graduates' employment prospects are as poor as Professor Lange predicts, the individual benefits may soon be minimal.

As the number of students rises again, Professor Lange believes that higher education will serve mainly as a screening process for employers. The quality of many courses and the calibre of students will be so low and the competition for jobs so fierce that higher education will confer the credentials necessary for success in the race for employment without raising productivity or skills levels. He is particularly scathing about the likely effect on jobs, citing Germany as an example of high levels of qualifications and unemployment: "The mystifying assumption that, by improving Britain's education and training record, somehow unemployment will disappear, is not just debatable: it is misleading at best and at worst it is utter nonsense."

The thesis does not square with the recent forecasts commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment, which saw the potential for another 1.5 million graduate jobs over a ten-year period. But it raises the valid question of what level of fees students will be willing to pay if the financial advantages of higher education become more marginal.

Professor Lange makes a logical case for universities to be set free to charge what the market will bear, leaving students to vote with their feet for a smaller higher education system in which low-quality courses go to the wall. Yet can any government afford to leave access to the top universities entirely at the mercy of the market?

Every proponent of unfettered tuition fees assumes that bursary funds will be available for those who cannot afford to pay thousands of pounds a year for a degree course. Invariably, American universities are quoted as the model to emulate. But the level of donations to American universities by graduates and corporations is out of all proportion to the British system, and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Only by charging even higher fees to those who can afford to pay would our universities be able to build up the funds necessary for "needs-blind" admissions.

The burden on a resentful and electorally crucial middle class would be considerable because the idea that graduates would be the ones to repay the costs of tuition is already a myth in many homes.

With the means-testing of student loans, the Government has limited still further the availability of affordable finance for undergraduates. Increasingly, parents are the paymasters as university replaces independent education as a drain on the family budget. The £1,000 limit is unlikely to change before the next election, but few would bet on it remaining for long thereafter. The new administration will have a fine balance to strike between popular pressures and the need to preserve the quality of higher education.

Acting up at the RSC

Theatre studies are a valuable practical experience, says **George Turnbull**

Daunting though it may seem, every drama student dreams of performing on the big stage, and last week a company of 34 A-level students took to the boards at the Royal Shakespeare Company's The Other Place theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. For the first time, students from the School of Performing Arts at Stratford-upon-Avon College were given the opportunity to perform five, 30-minute plays three times a day for two days.

The plays, each an original, were created for the practical part of the A level, which accounts for 40 per cent of the final assessment. Despite the creative freedom, stringent exam rules still applied.

The plays were performed as professional productions before an audience, but the lecturers were not allowed to direct. Nevertheless, the calibre of the work was high.

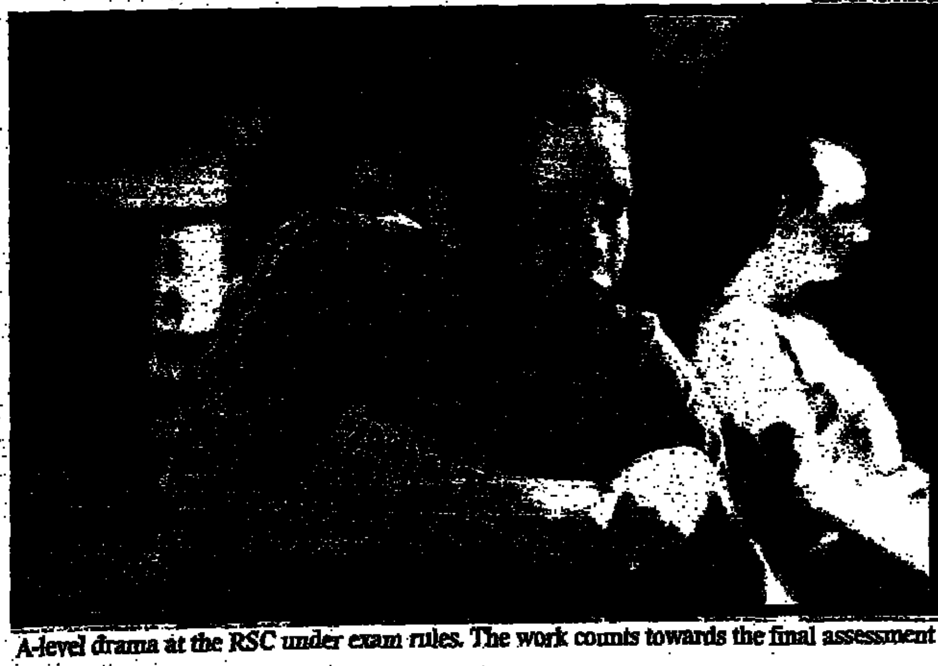
Stratford is one of the most sought-after drama colleges in the country and students travel from as far as Birmingham. Some alumni, such as the comedian Ben Elton, even moved to the area just to attend the college.

Drama, it seems, is not just for potential Kate Winslets or Joseph Fienneses; it has a positive influence on those entering other "performance" professions. Francesca McVeigh, 18, who is going to study law at University College London, says: "I want to be a barrister. And this course gives us confidence, an ability to communicate, to work as a team and to lead others. Problem-solving comes naturally, too, when you are putting a show together. Acting is important to me . . . after all, that's what barristers do."

Mark Taylor, the school head, agrees. "Role play is an essential part of learning and the key skills mentioned by Francesca are essential to survival in competitive international companies," he says. "Changes to A levels now being developed for introduction next year will ensure that their importance will be emphasised, not only within theatre studies but across the whole A-level and GNVQ provision."

The original A level in theatre studies was developed through the college more than 20 years ago and is examined by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance. Nationally, more than 9,000 students sit the examination.

GEORGE TURNBULL



A-level drama at the RSC under exam rules. The work counts towards the final assessment

Richard Evans expects young rider to top Ascot bill

Saleel can spearhead double for Forristal

ON AN afternoon when every pound of lead in the saddle of runners at Ascot will be an onerous burden, the ability to remove weight from a horse's back using the claiming allowance of amateur or conditional riders could prove invaluable.

This points to Richie Forristal enjoying the riding day of his life in today's gluepot conditions. The young Irish amateur, voted point-to-point rider of the year last season, has been a revelation in the National Hunt ranks this term and, with 20 winners, is only four behind Alan Dempsey, who has enjoyed the advantage of a constant supply of chances from the powerful Mary Reveley yard.

Forristal is quite small by jump jockey standards, weighing around 9 stone, but is strong as well as stylish and is already on the books of Dave Roberts, the top jockeys' agent. In the Silver Doctor Open Novices' Handicap (2.05), he teams up with Saleel, with whom he has forged a successful partnership.



Victories in similarly soft ground at Market Rasen and Folkestone, plus an even better performance in defeat just behind the useful Kingsmark, highlight his chance from a favourable mark on his handicap debut. Lucy Wadham, who took out a full licence last summer having earlier held a permit, boasts a 42 per cent strike-rate with runners under Rules and has her seven-year-old in rude health.

Bosums Mate looks harshly treated off 12 stone and the main threat to Saleel is likely to come from Taufan Boy, twice a course winner this season in similarly demanding ground.

Toby Balding, Taufan Boy's trainer, should get close in the Rosling King Hurdle (3.40) with Brave Tornado, another mudlark who is chasing a treble after wins at Ascot and Cheltenham. However, the pair likely to fight out the finish are Jim Old's Three Farthings and The Butterwick Kid, ridden by Forristal.

Three Farthings showed markedly improved form to win on his seasonal reappearance at Wincanton on Boxing Day and, being a half-brother to Simpson, should be seen to even better effect over this longer trip. His hurdling is still open to improvement, which sways me marginally in favour of **The Butterwick Kid**.

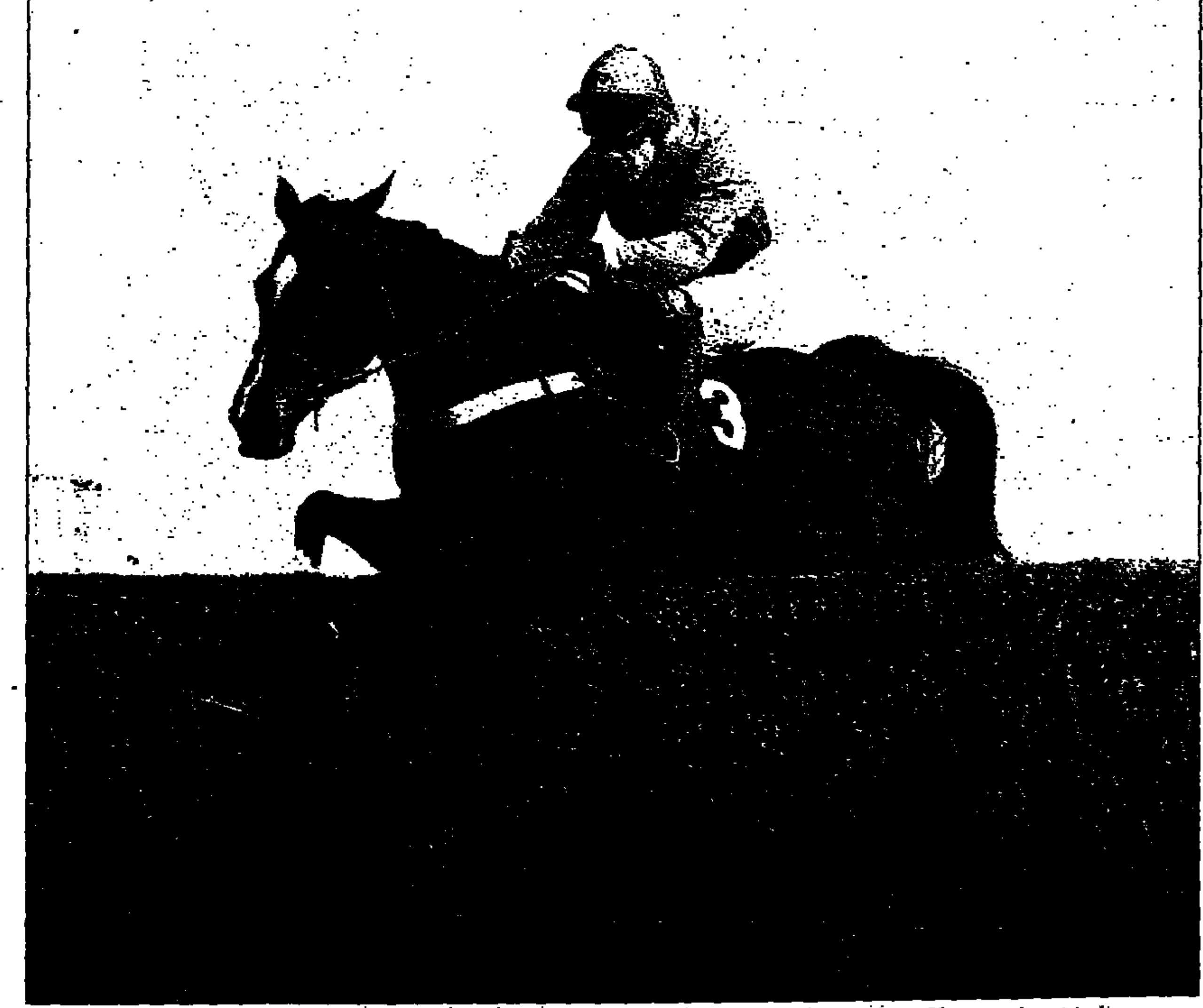
Although Richard Fahey's runner is 4lb out of the handicap, Forristal's 5lb claim compensates and the dual-purpose performer looked one to follow after winning with ease at Wetherby over Christmas. His jumping in the mud was particularly fluent that day and he quickened away from his rivals in the manner of an improving performer.

Three-runner novice chases, where tactics invariably play an important role, are not ideal betting races and, while **Nipper Reed** is chosen for the PML Lightning Chase (2.40), a watching brief is advised.

The shape of the rescheduled Victor Chandler Chase (3.10) has changed since Saturday with the defection of Or Royal, top weight for the abandoned running, and that could have a significant impact on the result. Celibate now heads the weights and that could prove too much for this sparely-made eight-year-old.

By contrast, the rise in the weights will favour Get Real, but Nicky Henderson's front-running course and distance winner may find this heavy ground against him. Monnaie Forte has also shown his best form on faster going.

However, in a tricky race, **Hill Society**, a short-head second to Champleve in the Arkle Trophy last March, just gets the nod ahead of Call Equiname, who returns from a 434-day absence but invariably runs well fresh.



Nipper Reed has just two rivals as he chases a treble in the PML Lightning Novices' Chase at Ascot today

ASCOT

THUNDERER

12.30 Buckland Lad. 1.00 Buckside. 1.30 Native Fling. 2.05 Taufan Boy. 2.40 Nipper Reed. 3.10 Get Real. 3.40 Brave Tornado. 4.10 **LANCASTRIAN JET** (nap)

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.10 **GET REAL**.

GOING: HURDLES. HEAVY; CHASES: SOFT (HEAVY IN PLACES)
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.30 DURHAM RANGER HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,788: 2m 3f 110yd) (6 runners)

101 /P5P-P DENVER BAY 95 (F,S) (B Naylor) J Gilford 12-11-10 ... L Aspell –
102 21-121 BUCKLAND LAD 9 (D,F,S) (Mrs R Hepburn) D Gressell 8-11-0 ... B Fenton 121
103 31P2-1 LUKE WARM 13 (D,G,S) (Mrs J Lee) D Gandolfo 9-10-6 ... G Bradley 110
104 0-3110 ELEGANT DES COSSES 36 (B,BF,G,S) (R J B Partners) P Hobbs 7-10-5 ... R Widger (5) –
105 P1-124 THE EENS 55 (BF,S) (Shaw Hill Golf Club) D McCain 7-10-0 ... T J Murphy [illegible]
106 PP/P32 SPY DESSA 7 (Mrs P Cann) A Newcombe 11-10-0 ... N Williamson 82

Long handicap: The Eens 9-11, Spy Dessa 8-2.

BETTING: 7-4 Buckland Lad, 11-4 Luke Warm, 7-2 The Eens, 5-1 Elegant Des Cosses, 12-1 Denver Bay, 20-1 Spy Dessa.

1998: NO CORRESPONDING RACE

FORM FOCUS Buckland Lad beat Morstock 5l in 5-runner handicap chase at Kempton (2m, heavy); previously 8l 2nd of 4 to Sierra Bay in handicap chase at Towcester (2m 110yd, soft). Luke Warm beat Punters Bar short head in 7-runner handicap chase at Warwick (2m 4f 110yd, soft); previously 7l 2nd of 7 to Calm Down in novice handicap chase at Warwick (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Elegant Des Cosses 38l 8th of 11 to Lizzys First in novice handicap hurdle at Exeter (3m 1f 110yd, soft), previously beat The Boozing Brief neck in 8-runner ladies handicap hurdle at Newton Abbot (3m 1f, soft). The Eens 29l 4th of 9 to Jemaro in handicap chase at Haydock (2m 4f, soft); previously 23l 2nd of 4 to River Lossie in handicap chase at Haydock (2m 4f, good to soft). Spy Dessa 7l 2nd of 7 to Harding in novice handicap chase at Folkestone (2m, soft), previously beaten a distance 3rd of 8 to Zaggy Lane in novice handicap chase at Newton Abbot (2m 5f 110yd, soft).

BUCKLAND LAD won in good style at Kempton and can defy a 6lb rise in the handicap

1.00 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (QUALIFIER)
(£3,680: 2m 4f) (7 runners)

201 2100-1 BUCKSIDE 35 (S) (Queen Elizabeth) N Henderson 7-11-5 ... M A Fitzgerald 84
202 21-042 FINE ATTITUDE 22 (S) (M Morley) R Rowe 6-11-0 ... B Fenton 90
203 25-F61 MY TERN 27 (S) (P Dutton, F Ford & D Sithwood) L Wells 5-11-0 ... W Greatrex (7) 82
204 -P6322 NEWBY END 21 (BF) (J Brownrigg) M Madgwick 5-11-0 ... J Goldstein (5) [illegible]
205 21-101 PROMINENT PROFILE 25 (G,S) (Son Partnership) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-0 ... C Llewellyn –
206 50-5 BROWN SEAL 23 (Mrs P Corbett) Mrs M Jones 7-10-9 ... A Maguire –
207 1-6 KELLYS CONQUEST 36 (S) (F Matthews) J Mullins 6-10-9 ... R Thornton 80

BETTING: 5-4 Buckside, 2-1 Prominent Profile, 7-1 My Tern, 8-1 Fine Attitude, 10-1 Newby End, 33-1 Kellys Conquest, 50-1 Brown Seal.

1998: MUSKHILL 7-11-0 B Johnson (4-5 fav) D Nicholson 6 ran

FORM FOCUS Buckside beat Optimistic Thatcher 8l in 7-runner novice hurdle at Lingfield (2m 110yd, heavy); previously 31l 8th of 18 to King's Road in national hunt flat (grade 1) at Punchestown (2m, heavy). Fine Attitude 5l 2nd of 10 to Jim Jam Joey in novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 6f 110yd, heavy); previously 34l last of 4 to Buck's Palace in novice hurdle at Wincanton (2m 6f, good to soft). My Tern beat Silk Vestments neck in 7-runner mares novice hurdle at Wincanton (2m, heavy), previously 14l 6th of 11 to Native King in novice hurdle at Sandown (2m 110yd, good). Newby End 28l 2nd of 8 to Phar Less Hassle in novice hurdle at Plumpton (2m 4f, heavy); previously neck 2nd of 14 to Russell Road in novice hurdle at Towcester (2m 5f, soft). Prominent Profile beat Frosty Canyon 6l in 8-runner nat hunt flat (grade 2) at Chepstow (2m 110yd, soft); previously 29l 11th of 18 to Scarlet Emperor in national hunt flat race at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good). Brown Seal beaten a distance 5th of 10 to Perfect Fellow in maiden hurdle at Stratford (2m 6f 110yd, heavy), previously 56l 13th of 17 to Cathedral Belle in mares national hunt flat at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good to firm). Kellys Conquest 28l 6th of 11 to Shipcal in mares novice hurdle at Exeter (2m 3f 110yd, soft).

BUCKSIDE had any amount in hand on his public bow and should be followed

1.30 BUCKTAIL HANDICAP CHASE (£5,420: 2m) (4 runners)

301 F-1322 DANTES CAVALIER 20 (D,F,G,S) (Exors late W Drew) D Gandolfo 9-11-10 ... G Bradley 97
302 3-4213 THE OUTBACK WAY 68 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs B Granger) G Wintle 9-11-3 ... W Marston 116
303 5/1311 NATIVE FLING 21 (D,S) (A Loze) P Hobbs 7-10-12 ... R Dunwoody 115
304 -42313 ROVESTAR 25 (B,D,G,S) (G Burrell) C Popham 8-10-3 ... R Farrant [illegible]

BETTING: 6-4 Dantes Cavalier, 9-4 Native Fling, 7-2 The Outback Way, 5-1 Rovestar.

1998: SUPER COIN 10-11-4 N Williamson (5-4 co fav) R Lee 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Dantes Cavalier beaten a distance 2nd of 6 to Fourth In Line in handicap chase at Newbury (2m 4f, soft), previously 6l 2nd of 5 to Nearly An Eye in handicap chase at Uttoxeter (2m, soft). The Outback Way 5l 3rd of 13 to Castlerocky in handicap chase at Cheltenham (2m 4f 110yd, good), previously beat Philatelic 2½l in 5-runner handicap chase at Plumpton (2m 5f, soft). Native Fling beat Greco Boy 6l in 8-runner novice handicap chase at Exeter (2m 1f 110yd, heavy), previously beat Hang'em Out To Dry 2½l in 10-runner novice handicap chase at Hereford (2m, good to soft). Rovestar 41l 3rd of 4 to Storm Damage in handicap chase at Chepstow (2m 3f 110yd, soft), previously beat Mouse Bird 5l in 4-runner handicap chase at Warwick (2m, soft).

NATIVE FLING has impressed in winning his first two starts over fences and can bring up the hat-trick

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
T Easterby	3	9	33.3	J Osborne	16	72	22.2
D Gandolfo	4	17	23.5	N Williamson	16	72	22.2
D Nicholson	18	88	20.5	L Wyer	3	15	20.0
M Pipe	15	78	19.2	A Maguire	13	73	17.8
G Balding	7	37	18.9	R Dunwoody	20	114	17.5
N Twiston-Davies	12	79	15.2	L Aspell	3	18	16.7
Mrs J Pitman	5	34	14.7	B Fenton	4	27	14.8
J Old	4	28	14.3	P Hide	8	55	12.3
C Mann	5	36	13.9	J McCarthy	3	25	12.0



Dorcet date

LORD DORCET, pulled out of today's Victor Chandler Chase at Ascot because of unsuitably soft ground, will warm up for the Cheltenham Festival in the Mansion House Handicap Chase at Doncaster tomorrow week. The nine-year-old is being targeted at the Queen Mother Champion Chase.

2.05 SILVER DOCTOR OPEN NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(£5,329: 3m) (5 runners)

401 11-211 BOSUNS MATE 20 (D,F,G,S) (H Parker) N Twiston-Davies 6-12-0 ... J Goldstein (5) 111
402 212125 TAUFAN BOY 34 (BF,C,S) (Supreme Team) G Balding 6-11-0 ... F Keniry (7) 118
403 42-121 SALEEL 18 (S) (Waterfall Racing) Mrs L Wadham 7-10-7 ... Mr R Forristal (5) [illegible]
404 P-52F3 JUSTICE ALONE 15 (BF) (Poppet Partnership) D Nicholson 6-10-0 ... A Maguire 108
405 54-061 SAINT JOE 21 (S) (St Joseph Partnership) O Sherwood 6-10-0 ... J Osborne 83

Long handicap: Justice Alone 9-4, Saint Joe 9-1.

BETTING: 9-4 Saleel, 5-2 Bosuns Mate, 3-1 Taufan Boy, 6-1 Justice Alone, 7-1 Saint Joe.

1998: MACMORRIS 5-11-0 R Johnson (7-2 co fav) D Nicholson 6 ran

FORM FOCUS Bosuns Mate beat Yeoman Sailor 5l in 10-runner novice hurdle at Newbury (3m 110yd, soft), previously beat Irish Banker 9l in 6-runner novice hurdle grade 2 at Cheltenham (3m 110yd, good to soft). Taufan Boy 23l 5th of 7 to Pealings in handicap hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m 4f 110yd, heavy), previously neck 2nd of 10 to Bramblehill Duke in novice handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 5f, good). Saleel beat Polyphony 7l in 5-runner novice hurdle at Folkestone (2m 6f 110yd, heavy), previously 3½l 2nd of 13 to Kingsmark in novice hurdle at Folkestone (2m 6f 110yd, heavy) with Saint Joe (levels) beaten a distance 6th. Justice Alone 25l 3rd of 9 to Springfield Scally in novice hurdle at Market Rasen (3m, heavy). Saint Joe beat Bora Bora 5l in 4-runner novice hurdle at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, soft).

BOSUNS MATE is progressing very well and can give the weight away

2.40 P.M.L. LIGHTNING NOVICES CHASE BBC2
(Grade II: £16,905: 2m) (3 runners)

501 0-1131 DESERT MOUNTAIN 55 (D,F,G,S) (Easy Monk) N Callaghan 6-11-4 ... R Dunwoody 128
502 005-11 NIPPER REED 20 (D,G,S) (G Piper) R Simpson 9-11-4 ... A Maguire [illegible]
503 3-2212 FLAGSHIP UBERALLES 25 (BF,D,G,S) (A Brady) P Nicholls 5-10-12 ... J Tizzard 112

BETTING: 5-4 Nipper Reed, 7-4 Flagship Uberalles, 11-4 Desert Mountain.

1998: WADE ROAD 7-11-4 J F Titley (7-1) Miss H Knight 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Desert Mountain beat Country Star neck in 5-runner novice chase at Warwick (2m, soft), previously 5½l 3rd of 5 to Mister Morose in novice chase grade 2 at Cheltenham (2m, good). Nipper Reed beat Colliers Bay 3l in 7-runner novice chase at Newbury (2m 1f, soft); previously beat High Express 3l in 6-runner novice chase at Uttoxeter (2m, heavy). Flagship Uberalles 11l 2nd of 7 to Potentate in novice chase at Chepstow (2m 3f 110yd soft); previously beat Sarsum Corda 13l in 5-runner novice chase at Exeter (2m 1f 110yd, good).

FLAGSHIP UBERALLES appeared to be outstayed latest and is worth another chance back at two miles

3.10 VICTOR CHANDLER HANDICAP CHASE BBC2
(Grade II: £20,800: 2m) (8 runners)

601 124-02 CELIBATE 34 (CD,F,G,S) (Stamford Bridge Partnership) C Mann 8-11-10 ... Mr N Fehily (7) 141
602 6-1214 HILL SOCIETY 48 (D,G,S) (P Garvey) N Meade (Ire) 7-11-8 ... P Carberry 148
603 /11/1- CALL EQUINAME 434 (D,G) (M Coburn) P Nicholls 9-11-3 ... J Tizzard –
604 525-13 FLYING INSTRUCTOR 25 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs J Webber) P R Webber 9-11-3 ... J Osborne 154
605 240341 CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE 25 (CD,S) (Cumbrian Ind) T Easterby 10-10-11 (4ex) ... L Wyer 140
606 12312- MONNAIE FORTE 279 (BF,D,F,G,S) (J Adams) J Adam 9-10-8 ... B Powell 157
607 5135-4 MANHATTAN CASTLE 47 (D,F,G,S) (P Fitzpatrick) A L Moore (Ire) 10-10-7 ... C O'Dwyer 103
608 112-21 GET REAL 34 (CD,S) (Pioneer Heat-Treatment) N Henderson 8-10-1 (4ex) ... M A Fitzgerald [illegible]

BETTING: 5-2 Get Real, 7-2 Monnaie Forte, 4-1 Hill Society, 6-1 Celibate, 7-1 Cumbrian Challenge, 12-1 Manhattan Castle, 14-1 Flying Instructor, Call Equiname.

1998: JEFFELL 8-10-11 C O'Dwyer (13-2) A L Moore (Ire) 9 ran

FORM FOCUS Hill Society 5½l 4th of 10 to Direct Route in chase grade 1 at Sandown (2m, good) with Celibate (2lb worse off) 15l 9th. Call Equiname beat Time Won't Wait 1l in 7-runner handicap chase at Cheltenham (2m, good) with Flying Instructor (3lb better off) 16l 3rd; previously beat Ride Thyme 1½l in 8-runner novice chase at Worcester (2m 4f 110yd, good). Cumbrian Challenge beat Direct Route 1½l in 5-runner handicap chase grade 2 at Wetherby (2m, soft) with Flying Instructor (levels) 5l 3rd. Monnaie Forte 6l 2nd of 8 to Lake Kariba in handicap chase at Ayr (2m, good) with Flying Instructor (4lb worse off) 23l 5th and Cumbrian Challenge (5lb better off) 26l 8th; previously beat Tibetan 1l in 11-runner handicap hurdle at Ascot (2m 110yd, good). Manhattan Castle 19l 4th of 8 to Imperial Call in chase grade 1 at Punchestown (2m 4f, heavy), previously 41l 5th of 8 to Big Matt in handicap chase grade 1 at Punchestown (2m, heavy). Get Real beat Celibate (3lb better off) 11l in 5-runner handicap chase at Ascot (2m, good to soft).

GET REAL has been favoured by the overnight rising of the weights and looks sure to go close

3.40 ROSLING KING HANDICAP HURDLE BBC2
(SHOWCASE RACE AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE)
(£10,338: 3m) (11 runners)

1 11/45P PHARANEAR 34 (D,G,S) (Stainless Threaded Fasteners) D Nicholson 9-11-13 ... R Thornton 136
2 01/411 BRAVE TORNADO 42 (CD,S) (Miss B Swire) G Balding 8-11-9 ... B Fenton 140
3 3/4-F6 SUN SURFER 72 (G,S) (Hon S Sainsbury) H Daly 11-10-10 ... S Wynne 63
4 5112-1 THREE FARTHINGS 27 (S) (Mrs J Britten) J Old 9-10-9 ... T J Murphy 136
5 3-4P4P TREASURE AGAIN 57 (B,CD,G,S) (J Gaynor) Mrs M Jones 10-10-7 ... A Maguire 83
6 4-1341 JUST NIP 22 (C,F,G,S) (B Seal, D & M Evans) Mrs L Richards 6-10-6 ... J A McCarthy 144
7 (2-013 TEAATRAL 25 (B,G,S) (B Cover Bloodstock Trading Ltd) C Egerton 5-10-2 ... N Williamson [illegible]
8 1214-P GOOD LORD MURPHY 63 (BF,G,S) (Country Side) P Hobbs 7-10-2 ... G Tormey 142
9 134-41 THE BUTTERWICK KID 25 (S) (R Chambers) R Fahey 6-10-0 ... Mr R Forristal (5) 118
10 151P-3 BELMORE ROCK 22 (F,G,S) (Mrs A Harrison) M Pipe 12-10-0 ... G Supple (3) 139
11 01-1F3 JET BOYS 73 (V,BF,D,F,G,S) (Jet Stationery Company Ltd) Mrs J Pitman 9-10-0 ... B Powell 140

Long handicap: The Butterwick Kid 9-10, Belmore Rock 9-5, Jet Boys 9-7.

BETTING: 3-1 The Butterwick Kid, 7-2 Three Farthings, 5-1 Brave Tornado, 6-1 Good Lord Murphy, 8-1 Teaatral, 9-1 Just Nip, Belmore Rock, 14-1 Treasure Again, 20-1 others.

1998: TOMPETOO 7-10-0 C Llewellyn (7-2) N Twiston-Davies 10 ran

FORM FOCUS Brave Tornado beat Sweet Glow 1½l in 11-runner handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (3m 110yd, good to soft) with Pharanear (7lb better off) 9l 5th. Sun Surfer beaten a distance 6th of 9 to Bia Again Mou in handicap hurdle at Newbury (3m 5f, good to soft) with Teaatral (9lb worse off) beaten a distance 8th. Three Farthings beat Papo Kharisma ½l in 6-runner handicap hurdle at Wincanton (2m 6f, heavy), previously 12l 2nd of 6 to Sybar in handicap hurdle at Ascot (3m, good) with Treasure Again (12lb better off) 13l 3rd. Treasure Again pulled up in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good), previously 22l 4th of 5 to Clever Remark in handicap chase at Towcester (3m 1f, soft). Just Nip beat Welsh Silk 1½l in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Fontwell (2m 6f 110yd, heavy) with Belmore Rock (levels) 5l 3rd. Good Lord Murphy pulled up in novice chase at Exeter (3m 6f 110yd, good to soft), previously 22l 4th of 12 to Unsinkable Boxer in novice hurdle grade 1 at Aintree (3m 110yd, soft). The Butterwick Kid beat For Cathal 1½l in 6-runner handicap hurdle at Wetherby (2m 7f, soft) with Teaatral (13lb better off) 10l 3rd. Jet Boys [illegible] 3rd of 5 to Flying Gunner in handicap hurdle at Newbury (3m 110yd, good to soft).

THREE FARTHINGS posted a useful effort on his return and should do better still for the longer trip

4.10 MAR LODGE HANDICAP CHASE
(£10,798: 3m 110yd) (7 runners)

1 10B-5P GO BALLISTIC 69 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs S Lockyer) D Nicholson 10-12-0 ... A Maguire 151
2 1U1113 RIVER LOSSIE 27 (B,D,G,S) (C Beecham) C Egerton 10-11-7 ... J Osborne 140
3 3P6U4- NAHTHEN LAD 279 (G,S) (J Sharp) Mrs J Pitman 10-11-5 ... R Dunwoody 134
4 1-1210 TORDUFF EXPRESS 25 (CD,F,G,S) (Two Plus Two) P Nicholls 8-11-2 ... J Tizzard [illegible]
5 11-405 SAIL BY THE STARS 25 (D,G,S) (T Nunn) H Daly 10-11-1 ... S Wynne 143
6 2-0512 GLITTER ISLE 13 (S) (Mrs T Pilkington) J Gifford 9-11-1 ... P Hide 151
7 11-412 LANCASTRIAN JET 25 (BF,D,S) (Lancastrian Jet Racing) H Daly 8-10-1 ... N Williamson 155

BETTING: 3-1 Lancastrian Jet, 7-2 Glitter Isle, 5-1 Torduff Express, 11-2 River Lossie, 6-1 Go Ballistic, 8-1 Nahthen Lad, Sail By The Stars.

1998: COOL DAWN 10-11-2 A Thornton (10-1 fav) R Alner 4 ran

FORM FOCUS Go Ballistic pulled up in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 3f 110yd, good to soft), previously 27l 5th of 7 to The Proms in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good). River Lossie beaten a distance 3rd of 4 to Random Harvest in handicap chase at Wetherby (3m 1f, good to soft), previously beat Druid's Brook 17l in 5-runner handicap chase at Lingfield (3m, soft). Nahthen Lad 11l 4th of 15 to Baronet in handicap chase grade 3 at Ayr (4m 1f, good). Sail By The Stars 23l 5th of 14 to Kendal Cavalier in handicap chase grade 3 at Chepstow (3m 5f 110yd, soft) with Torduff Express (1lb worse off) 45l 8th. Glitter Isle 1l 2nd of 9 to Eudipe in handicap chase at Sandown (3m 5f 110yd, soft), previously beat Menesonic [illegible] in 3-runner handicap chase at Wincanton (3m 1f 110yd, heavy). Lancastrian Jet 23l 2nd of 4 to Dr Leunt in handicap chase at Kempton (3m, soft), previously beat Master Chef 2l in 5-runner handicap chase at Towcester (3m 1f, soft).

SAIL BY THE STARS barely lasted home in the Welsh National and ran well in the circumstances

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Taunton

Going: soft

1.20 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Perfect Venue** (M A Fitzgerald, 2-5 fav, Timekeeper's top rating); 2, Street Fighter (11-2); 3, Sherganzar (10-1). 11 ran. NR: Henbury Princess, Ulmoor Rose. 5l, ¾l. N Henderson. Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £1.90, £2.30. DF: £3.70. CSF: £3.23.

1.50 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Doctor Bravious** (J Magee, 11-4); 2, Blazing Castle (10-1); 3, Erawe (7-1). The Swan (4th) 5-4 fav. 6 ran. 3½l, 12l. Jamie Poulton. Tote: £3.60; £1.60, £4.10. DF: £17.80. CSF: £23.20.

2.20 (3m 3f ch) 1, **Zaggy Lane** (S Burrough, 13-2); 2, Oban (16-1); 3, Jazzman (33-1). Careysville evens fav. 11 ran. 2½l, 8l. P Rodford. Tote: £6.80; £2.20, £3.60, £10.70. DF: £53.70. Tote Trifecta: £4,436.30. CSF: £92.39. Tricast: £2,925.90.

2.50 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, **Santabless** (N Williamson, Evens); 2, Leaburn (12-1); 3, Indian Legend (33-1). 8 ran. ½l, dist. M Pitman. Tote: £1.80; £1.60, £2.80, £5.60. DF: £6.50. CSF: £12.59.

3.20 (2m 3f ch) 1, **Hightown Cavalier** (N Williamson, 4-1); 2, Go Go Henry (7-4 fav); 3, May Sunset (7-1). 7 ran. 8l, 13l. R Hodges. Tote: £4.50; £1.60, £2.20. DF: £3.80. CSF: £10.85.

3.50 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, **Life's Work** (R Widger, 15-2); 2, Country Kris (4-1); 3, Granby Bell (13-2). Beefy Nova (4th) 3-1 fav. 10 ran. 1½l, 12l. P Hobbs. Tote: £7.60; £2.90, £1.30, £2.30. DF: £17.70. CSF: £36.93. Tricast: £194.62.

4.20 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Vent d'Aout** (C Maude, 7-1); 2, Boggs Turn (3-1); 3, Distant Storm (9-1). Atlantic Mist (5th) 11-4 fav. 7 ran. 1¼l, 4l. M Pipe. Tote: £6.70; £1.60, £2.60. DF: £10.50. CSF: £26.60.

Jackpot: £5,916.60.
Placepot: £124.10. **Quadpot:** £60.70.

Ludlow

Going: chase g/soft, soft in places, hurdles soft, g/soft in places

1.10 (2m hdle) 1, **Brilliant Star** (S Wynne, 13-2); 2, Father Krismas (11-8 fav); 3, Rocabee (3-1). 16 ran. NR: Some Grey. 2l, 5l. S Brookshaw. Tote: £6.30; £1.90, £1.20, £1.50. DF: £8.40. CSF: £13.52.

1.40 (2m hdle) 1, **Coble** (A C Coyle, 33-1); 2, Bonny (14-1); 3, High Low (8-1); 4, Tremendisto (16-1). Connel's Croft 3-1 fav. 19 ran. NR: Inchydoney Boy. 1¼l, 1l. D McCain. Tote: £27.10; £4.60, £3.50, £2.00, £3.40. DF: £109.30. CSF: £384.04. Tricast: £3,696.21.

2.10 (3m ch) 1, **Moorland Highflyer** (W Marston, 9-1); 2, No Fiddling (7-2); 3, Daddy Dancer (10-1). Knightsbridge Scot (4th) 2-1 fav. 8 ran. 2½l, 1¾l. A Hobbs. Tote: £10.60; £1.30, £1.40, £2.40. DF: £11.30. CSF: £35.76. Tricast: £284.03.

2.40 (2m ch) 1, **Rockforce** (J Tizzard, 4-6 fav); 2, Ballybay (9-1); 3, Tee Tee Too (40-1). 8 ran. 3½l, 13l. P Nicholls. Tote: £1.60; £1.40, £1.50, £7.20. DF: £4.70. CSF: £6.48. Tricast: £113.56.

3.10 (3m 2f 110yd hdle) 1, **Tap On Tootsie** (L Harvey, 16-1); 2, Lady of Gortmerron (15-8 fav); 3, Blazing Storm (7-1). 13 ran. NR: Whitebonnet. 15l, 9l. T Wall. Tote: £21.60; £3.10, £1.40, £2.10. DF: £33.70. CSF: £43.39. Tricast: £227.65.

3.40 (2m 4f ch) 1, **Legal Right** (R McGrath, 11-2); 2, High In The Clouds (15-8); 3, Fanlaron (evens fav). 10 ran. 2½l, 15l. J O'Neill. Tote: £5.70; £1.50, £1.10, £1.40. DF: £6.50. CSF: £14.79.

4.10 (2m flat) 1, **Count Campioni** (Mr T Gibney, 3-1 fav); 2, Handyman (20-1); 3, Will Scarlet (50-1). 18 ran. Nk, 8l. Mrs J Pitman. Tote: £3.50; £2.30, £6.70, £8.90. DF: £49.70. CSF: £69.00.

Placepot: £42.00. **Quadpot:** £7.50.

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

1.00 (1m 2f) 1, **Clonoe** (A Clark, 14-1); 2, Mendoza (11-1); 3, Slip Jig (10-1). Sammys Shuffle (5th) 11-8 fav. 11 ran. Nk, 2½l. R Ingram. Tote: £16.90; £2.40, £3.80, £4.60. DF: £52.60. CSF: £146.59. Tricast: £1,476.09.

1.30 (1m 2f) 1, **Whatever's Right** (W Hutchinson, 10-1); 2, Hawksbill Henry (3-1); 3, Harvey White (4-1). Star Turn 13-8 fav. 10 ran. Sh hd, 3½l. M Usher. Tote: £20.00; £6.10, £1.10, £2.00. DF: £26.80. CSF: £36.05. Tricast: £132.76.

2.00 (1m) 1, **Zimiri** (S Whitworth, 5-2 fav); 2, Square Mile Miss (4-1); 3, Mr Rough (9-1). 11 ran. 1l, 1l. J Toller. Tote: £3.00; £1.30, £1.90, £3.10. DF: £7.70. CSF: £11.95.

2.30 (5f) 1, **Kayo Gee** (T Sprake, 4-1); 2, Grasslandik (5-2 fav); 3, Aa-Youknownothing (10-1). 9 ran. 5l, 3l. A McNae. Tote: £5.90; £1.90, £1.80, £2.10. DF: £7.10. CSF: £13.65. Tricast: £86.51.

3.00 (7f) 1, **Grand Coronet** (L Carter, 3-1); 2, Legend Falls (11-4); 3, Admirals Place (5-4 fav). 6 ran. NR: Cutaway. 6l, 3½l. T Mills. Tote: £3.60; £1.90, £1.40. DF: £4.60. CSF: £10.97.

3.30 (7f) 1, **Topton** (J Quinn, 13-2); 2, Mutabassir (11-4 jt-fav); 3, Robo Magic (14-1). Love Academy (6th) 11-4 jt-fav. 9 ran. 1½l, ¾l. P Howling. Tote: £5.70; £1.90, £1.80, £4.90. DF: £12.60. CSF: £22.66. Tricast: £223.20.

4.00 (1m 4f) 1, **Such Boldness** (P Fredericks, 9-4 fav); 2, Haydn James (12-1); 3, Arctic Courier (12-1). 11 ran. 9l, nk. Miss Gay Kelleway. Tote: £2.60; £1.40, £1.80, £3.20. DF: £20.30. CSF: £31.08.

Placepot: £275.40. **Quadpot:** £9.00.

KELSO

THUNDERER

1.20 Shonara's Way. 1.50 Crazy Horse. 2.25 Deep Water. 2.55 Tough Test. 3.30 Oat Couture. 4.00 Supreme Target.

GOING: HEAVY SIS

1.20 TATTERSALLS (IRELAND) MARES NOVICES CHASE (QUALIFIER) (£3,526: 2m 6f 110yd) (7 runners)

1 -4P0 CHERRY DEE 15 (S) P Beaumont 8-10-10 ... R Supple –
2 60P0 DOUBLE BUCK 16 (B,S) W Kemp 7-10-10 ... C McCormack (3) –
3 0-5P INNOVATE 53 Miss L Russell 7-10-10 ... S Durack –
4 -433 LINWOOD 24 (S) N Richards 8-10-10 ... A Dobbin –
5 1-43 LIPPY LOUISE 43 (F) Mrs M Reveley 7-10-10 ... P Niven [illegible]
6 13-0 SHONARA'S WAY 20 (G,S) P Monteith 8-10-10 ... S Taylor –
7 130- STORM CALL 279 (S) D Whillans 8-10-10 ... B Harding –

4-7 Lippy Louise, 5-2 Linwood, 12-1 Storm Call, 16-1 Cherry Dee, Shonara's Way, 33-1 Innovate, 50-1 Double Buck.

1.50 WEATHERBYS DATA SERVICES NOVICES HURDLE (£2,933: 2m 110yd) (9)

1 -221 CRAZY HORSE 27 (D,G,S) L Lungo 6-11-10 ... R Supple [illegible]
2 33F1 FINISTERRE 16 (D,G) J J O'Neill 6-11-10 ... R McGrath 78
3 5-PP BUABHALL MOR 8 M Todhunter 6-11-5 ... B Harding 67
4 00 EVENIN ALL 41 L Lungo 6-11-5 ... W Dowling (5) –
5 00-0 SAN FRANCISCO 15 A Whillans 5-11-5 ... S Taylor 39
6 FP/0 SCRAPTASTIC 22 P Beaumont 8-11-5 ... T Reed –
7 76-3 LINDAJANE 53 D Whillans 7-11-0 ... I Jardine (7) 95
8 06-0 SWIFTLY SUPREME 38 T Cuthbert 6-11-0 ... Mr T Davidson (7) –
9 0 MADMAN'S MIRAGE 15 V Thompson 4-10-7 ... Mr M Thompson –

4-9 Crazy Horse, 3-1 Finisterre, 6-1 Lindajane, 33-1 Buabhall Mor, 50-1 Evenin All, San Francisco, Scraptastic, Madman's Mirage, 66-1 Swiftly Supreme.

2.25 MACBET MOREBATTLE HURDLE (LIMITED HANDICAP) (£5,796: 2m 110yd) (8)

1 5218 JAROCIN 20 (G) Mrs D Thomson 6-11-7 ... B Storey 13
2 121- DEEP WATER 295 (CD,S) M Hammond 5-11-2 ... B Harding 138
3 P-14 JUSTIN MAC 62 (BF,CD,F,G,S) J FitzGerald 8-10-0 ... A Dobbin 130
4 2143 PALACEGATE KING 20 (BF,CD,S) A Whillans 10-10-0 ... N Horrocks (5) 139
5 3322 ROBBO 27 (B,D,S) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-0 ... Mr A Dempsey (3) 120
6 6204 CAULKER 27 (D,S) M Barnes 6-10-0 ... S Taylor [illegible]
7 2323 EXALTED 39 (F) T Cuthbert 6-10-0 ... C McCormack (3) 86
8 5,2F TURKISH TOWER 20 (C,S) R Nixon 8-10-0 ... R McGrath –

2-5 Deep Water, 9-2 Justin Mac, 8-1 Palacegate King, 12-1 Robbo, 16-1 others.

2.55 BESOM INN HANDICAP CHASE (£3,666: 3m 1f) (8)

1 -33U ROYAL MOUNTBROWNE 20 (G,S) Miss M Rowland 11-12-0 ... B Storey 112
2 34-1 TOUGH TEST 97 (CD,F,G,S) J J O'Neill 9-11-0 ... S Durack [illegible]
3 112- SWANBISTER 307 (BF,CD,F,S) L Lungo 9-10-13 ... R Supple 110
4 /3F3 IVY HOUSE 46 (B,G,S) J J O'Neill 11-10-10 ... R McGrath 125
5 214 SILLARS STALKER 15 (G,S) Miss S Williamson 11-10-0 ... G Lee 118
6 1F-3 SUNNY LEITH 27 (D,S) P Monteith 8-10-0 ... C McCormack (3) 90
7 4PP0 COPPERHURST 16 (C,G,S) W Kemp 8-10-0 ... Mr J Crowley (5) 114
8 0404 HEAVENLY CITIZEN 43 (D,F,S) J Gledson 11-10-0 ... K Johnson 116

7-4 Swanbister, 3-1 Tough Test, 7-2 Ivy House, 6-1 Royal Mountbrowne, Sillars Stalker, 25-1 Sunny Leith, 66-1 Copperhurst, Heavenly Citizen.

3.30 GLENDALE ENGINEERING HANDICAP CHASE (£3,614: 2m 1f) (7)

1 2PP- JYMJAM JOHNNY 315 (BF,S) J J O'Neill 10-12-0 ... R McGrath –
2 /5-4 OAT COUTURE 20 (G,S) L Lungo 11-11-6 ... R Supple –
3 112F SOLSGIRTH 27 (CD,G,S) J Barclay 8-11-1 ... C McCormack (3) 110
4 2F0U BLAZING DAWN 27 (D,F,G,S) J Hubbuck 12-10-0 ... B Storey [illegible]
5 3F3P EXCISE MAN 15 (F,G,S) J B Walton 11-10-0 ... D Parker 89
6 43P4 SILVER PEARL 7 J Barclay 8-10-0 ... S Durack 109
7 FP5P POLITICAL MANDATE 21 R Nixon 6-10-0 ... S Taylor 54

11-10 Solsgirth, 2-1 Jymjam Johnny, 11-2 Oat Couture, 7-1 Blazing Dawn, 33-1 Excise Man, 50-1 Silver Pearl, 66-1 Political Mandate.

4.00 EBF NOVICES HURDLE (£2,332: 2m 2f) (9)

1 2124 MR BUSBY 27 (S) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-5 ... P Niven 110
2 44- ISLE OF RHUM 351 P Monteith 7-11-0 ... C McCormack (3) 50
3 0P0 JAVAMAN 18 R Goldie 7-11-0 ... R Supple –
4 -053 SPLENDID MELODY 24 (S) T Tate 5-11-0 ... R Garritty [illegible]
5 403- STEEL RIGG 277 Mrs A Hamilton 7-11-0 ... D Parker –
6 0005 TARRA 15 Mrs D Sayer 5-11-0 ... M Gault (7) 68
7 46 DUN ROSE 58 J Storey 5-10-9 ... A Dobbin –
8 04/F SUPREME TARGET 57 J Charlton 7-10-9 ... B Storey –
9 6-P TOOTS 46 B Mactaggart 7-10-9 ... G Lee 46

11-10 Splendid Melody, 11-8 Mr Busby, 12-1 Isle Of Rhum, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

KELSO: Trainers: J FitzGerald, 5 winners from 20 runners, 25.0%; J J O'Neill, 9 from 36, 25.0%; Mrs M Reveley, 28 from 112, 25.0%; M Hammond, 21 from 103, 20.4%; M Todhunter, 3 from 24, 12.5%. Jockeys: P Niven, 30 winners from 111 rides, 27.0%; R Garritty, 14 from 63, 22.2%; A Dobbin, 24 from 137, 17.5%; R McGrath, 6 from 37, 16.2%.

SOUTHWELL: Trainers: A Kelleway, 4 winners from 8 runners, 50.0%; Miss S Wilton, 10 from 32, 31.3%; M Prescott, 24 from 78, 30.8%; Mrs L Jewell, 3 from 11, 27.3%. Jockeys: C Carver, 7 winners from 16 rides, 43.8%; G Hannon, 3 from 10, 30.0%; N Day, 8 from 31, 25.8%; N Pollard, 6 from 25, 24.0%; R Studholme, 5 from 27, 18.5%.

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER

12.40 Chaluz. 1.10 Family Tree. 1.40 Rambo Waltzer. 2.15 Indian Blaze. 2.45 Ambitious. 3.20 Broctune Line. 3.50 Evezio Rufo.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

12.40 BLUE MARLIN HANDICAP (Div I: £2,463: 7f) (9 runners)

1 -020 GODMERSHAM PARK 7 (CD) P Felgate 7-10-0 ... G Parkin 5
2 040- COOL SECRET 101 (F) K Ryan 4-9-12 ... A Culhane 8
3 000- I CRIED FOR YOU 94 (B,F) J Given 4-9-11 ... R Cochrane 9
4 4-40 ELITE HOPE 11 (D,G) N Tinkler 7-9-6 ... Dean McKeown 8
5 0-64 PLEASURE TRICK 11 (CD,F,G) Enrico Incisa 8-9-0 ... Kim Tinkler 1
6 0-21 MUTABARI 11 (CD) Mrs S Lamyman 5-8-12 (6ex) ... J Quinn 6
7 00-5 CHALUZ 16 (CD) K Burke 5-8-9 ... D Sweeney 2
8 66-0 NORTH ARDAR 11 (CD,F,G) R Brotherton 9-8-2 ... F Norton 4
9 4-12 RING THE CHIEF 4 (BF,CD,S) M Usher 7-7-10 ... Nicola Wright (7) 7

4-1 Pleasure Trick, 9-2 Mutabari, 5-1 Godmersham Park, Elite Hope, 11-2 Ring The Chief, 8-1 Chaluz, 10-1 Cool Secret, 12-1 others.

1.10 SHARK HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,801: 6f) (10)

1 420- DILETTO 99 E Alston 9-7 ... J Quinn 3
2 016- INDIAN SWINGER 70 (BF,CD) J Eustace 9-7 ... J Tate 9
3 032- RAJMATA 35 M Prescott 9-3 ... C Nutter 6
4 2-21 KEEN HANDS 2 (V) Mrs N Macauley 9-3 (6ex) ... R Price 4
5 33-4 OFF HIRE 7 (S) C Smith 9-2 ... C Carver (7) 2
6 50-3 TRINA'S PET 20 (B,C) J Balding 9-1 ... J Edmunds 1
7 60-1 WESTSIDE FLYER 11 (CD) A Kelleway 9-0 (6ex) ... D Sweeney 10
8 0-31 GYRO 14 (C,S) D Nicholls 8-12 ... R Cochrane 5
9 00-0 FAMILY TREE 17 (S) D Chapman 7-13 ... C Cogan (7) 7
10 54-5 SHARP RHYTHM 16 M Johnston 7-12 ... P Fessey 8

3-1 Rajmata, 5-1 Trina's Pet, 6-1 Indian Swinger, 7-1 Keen Hands, Off Hire, 8-1 Gyro, 10-1 Diletto, Westside Flyer, Sharp Rhythm, 25-1 Family Tree.

1.40 HALIBUT APPRENTICE CLAIMING STAKES (£1,994: 1m) (8)

1 51-3 RAMBO WALTZER 20 (BF,CD,F,G,S) D Nicholls 7-9-5 ... P Clarke (5) 2
2 4-01 FAR-SO-LA 7 (C,F) Mrs L Jewell 4-9-2 ... N Morris (7) 4
3 00-0 MOONRAKING 11 (B,CD) T Etherington 6-9-2 ... R Studholme 3
4 5545 AWESOME VENTURE 4 (CD,S) M Chapman 9-8-13 ... S Righton (3) 1
5 060- BE VALIANT 52 (G) Mrs N Macauley 5-8-10 ... G Hannon (5) 7
6 06-6 EASTLEIGH 9 (C,D,S) R Hollinshead 10-8-10 ... Lisa Watson (7) 6
7 00-0 CAMPIONE 15 M Tompkins 4-8-4 ... R Smith (3) 5
8 000/ SHARP HOLLY 586 M Bradstock 7-7-13 ... T Smith 8

4-7 Rambo Waltzer, 7-1 Far-So-La, Moonraking, Awesome Venture, 10-1 Be Valiant, 25-1 Campione, 50-1 Eastleigh, Sharp Holly.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ascot: 3.40 Jet Boys. Kelso: 1.20 Double Buck. Southwell: 2.45 Ambitious, Dryad. 3.20 Hyperico.

2.15 BLUE MARLIN HANDICAP (Div II: £2,450: 7f) (8)

1 -312 POLAR MIST 8 (V) Mrs N Macauley 4-9-12 (6ex) ... Dean McKeown 6
2 41-0 INDIAN BLAZE 14 (D,S) D Elsworth 5-9-11 ... N Pollard (3) 1
3 1-12 C-HARRY 4 (BF,CD,G,S) R Hollinshead 5-8-8 ... R Cochrane 5
4 34-4 TIME OF NIGHT 11 (CD) J Eyre 6-9-5 ... C Lowther 3
5 200- TECHNICIAN 97 (B) E Alston 4-8-12 ... J Quinn 2
6 16-0 DEKELSMARY 4 (CD) J Balding 4-8-9 ... J Edmunds 4
7 -022- KASS ALHAWA 60 (BF,C,D,G,S) D Chapman 6-8-7 ... A Culhane 7
8 60-0 THE BARNSLEY BELLE 18 (CD) G Woodward 6-7-10 ... P Fessey 8

11-4 C-Harry, 4-1 Technician, 9-2 Polar Mist, 11-2 Indian Blaze, 7-1 Time Of Night, 8-1 Kass Alhawa, 10-1 Dekelsmary, 16-1 The Barnsley Belle.

2.45 OYSTER MAIDEN STAKES (£2,093: 7f) (12)

1 22-4 DRYAD 13 (B) N Littmoden 4-9-0 ... T G McLaughlin 3
2 0-63 HOH NAVIGATOR 4 (B) D French Davis 4-9-0 ... S Whitworth 6
3 03-0 OUDALMUTEENA 10 (BF) V Soane 4-9-0 ... F Norton 4
4 PRINCE OF ABACO D Nicholls 4-9-0 ... A Culhane 11
5 000- ROYAL BLUE 60 M Usher 4-9-0 ... S Drowne 9
6 000- SAFE SHARP JO 58 M Jarvis 4-9-0 ... T Sprake 10
7 .00- SILVER SPIDER 213 Mrs S Lamyman 4-9-0 ... C Teague (3) 12
8 24-6 AMBITIOUS 17 (V) J Fanshawe 4-8-9 ... R Cochrane 8
9 0-00 HOPPIT 17 P Howling 4-8-9 ... C Lowther 1
10 0-00 JAZZY 11 J Norton 4-8-9 ... O Pears 2
11 00-2 MAI TAI 18 D Barker 4-8-9 ... J Quinn 7
12 00-6 TAR BABY 14 R Hollinshead 4-8-9 ... D Sweeney 5

11-4 Mai Tai, 7-2 Hoh Navigator, 4-1 Dryad, 6-1 Oudalmuteena, Ambitious, 8-1 Prince of Abaco, 20-1 Safe Sharp Jo, 25-1 others.

3.20 LOBSTER SELLING STAKES (£1,906: 1m 3f) (12)

1 040- STATAJACK 46 (B,C,F,G,S) D Elsworth 11-9-7 ... N Pollard (3) 11
2 /56- ALBEMINE 23J (S) A Juckes 10-9-2 ... V Slattery 9
3 42-0 BROCTUNE LINE 7 (CD) Mrs M Reveley 5-9-2 ... A Culhane 10
4 05-4 HARKNESS WARRIOR 4 (D) B Rothwell 5-9-2 ... R Winston (3) 6
5 40-3 HYPERICO 16 (V) Miss S Wilton 5-9-2 ... S Whitworth 12
6 00-0 PETER PERFECT 14 Mrs S Lamyman 5-9-2 ... C Teague (3) 7
7 0-00 LOBUCHE 11 (B,S) M Chapman 4-8-13 ... S Righton (7) 3
8 OUT FOR A CRUISE 84J D Carroll 5-8-11 ... R Cochrane 1
9 6-33 BUNNIES OWN 4 (C) J L Harris 4-8-8 ... Dean McKeown 2
10 -003 CASATI 9 P Felgate 4-8-8 ... L Newton 5
11 4-60 CLOUDS OF GLORY 7 J Norton 4-8-8 ... O Pears 4
12 303- PARLEZ MOI D'AMOUR 148 D Smith 4-8-8 ... C Lowther 8

3-1 Statajack, 5-1 Hyperico, 7-1 Harkness Warrior, 8-1 Bunnies Own, 10-1 others.

3.50 OCTOPUS HANDICAP (£2,918: 1m 4f) (12)

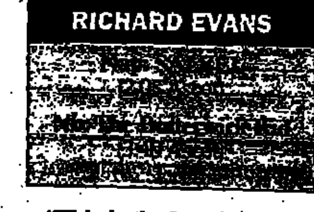
1 210- FILIAL 35 (CD,F,G,S) Mrs A Swinbank 8-10-0 ... N Day 9
2 314- ONCE MORE FOR LUCK 27J (D,F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 8-10-0 ... S Copp (5) 6
3 62-6 PICKENS 11 (CD,F) Enrico Incisa 7-9-11 ... Kim Tinkler 1
4 -151 COPPER SHELL 7 (CD) Mrs L Jewell 5-9-5 (6ex) ... R Price 11
5 680- REAR WINDOW 34J (CD,F) G McCourt 5-9-4 ... R Studholme (5) 8
6 1-44 NIKITA'S STAR 13 (CD,F) M Britain 6-9-0 ... G Bardwell 5
7 05/0 SAFECRACKER 11 (B,F) T Etherington 6-8-7 ... O Pears 10
8 005- QUEZON CITY 115 (D,F) Miss J A Camacho 5-8-3 ... J Quinn 2
9 0-10 LAA JADEED 4 (C) M Polglase 4-8-2 ... N Pollard (3) 4
10 051- TIME OUT 35 (C) G M Moore 4-7-10 ... P Fessey 7
11 -343 EVEZIO RUFO 9 (V,CD,S) N Littmoden 7-7-10 ... R Thomas (7) 12
12 -003 UNITUS 7 (S) M Chapman 6-7-10 ... P M Quinn (7) 3

3-1 Once More For Luck, 6-1 Copper Shell, 7-1 Laa Jadeed, 8-1 Filial, Pickens, Evezio Rufo, 10-1 Nikita's Star, Time Out, 12-1 others.

Zaggy Lane completes treble

ZAGGY LANE landed his third consecutive victory when holding the challenge of Oban by 2½ lengths in the Coral Handicap Chase at Taunton yesterday.

"He's a really nice horse and, hopefully, he can now go from strength to strength," his trainer, Pat Rodford, said. "The two entries we've made for him are Uttoxeter's Singer And Friedlander Chase and the Sun Alliance Chase at the Cheltenham Festival.



"This is the best horse I've ever handled as I've never had one before that has won three races on the bounce," the trainer added.

The Venetia Williams-trained Careysville was sent off a well-backed evens favourite to follow up a recent Folkestone success, but trailed in well beaten in seventh place with the trainer unable to offer any explanation for the dismal effort.

Norman Williamson, the rider of Careysville, had better luck when steering home a double, courtesy of the Mark Pitman-trained Santabless and Hightown Cavalier, handled by Ron Hodges.

MOTOR RACING

Toyota opt to go solo in the fast lane

By Kevin Eason

THE lure of Formula One is tempting yet another leading car maker into an ambitious programme that could cost more than £250 million just to get on to the grand prix grid. Toyota, the third-largest motor manufacturer in the world, announced yesterday that it wants to join the Formula One racing circuit, probably in 2003.

The decision stokes up the prospect of a contest between Toyota and Honda, its Japanese rival, which comes to Formula One next year with its own team. Moreover, the wider significance will not escape teams competing at present: they are concerned about whether they can survive a future that looks as if it will be dominated by multinational corporations.

Like Honda, Toyota seems to want to go it alone by making both the engines and chassis — a departure from the conventions of the sport in which motor manufacturers have usually been happy to supply engines to independent teams. Hiroshi Okuda, the Toyota president, has appointed André de Cortanze, who oversees the company's efforts in the Le Mans 24-hour Race, to set up a base in Germany in preparation. Several teams in Formula One would have been hoping for Toyota to choose a partnership. Arrows has no engine supplier, while Jordan uses engines from Mugen-Honda, a deal that might yet be usurped by the full entry of a Honda works team.

Dr Mark Jenkins, senior lecturer at the Cranfield School of Management, said that the entry of Honda and Toyota signals the end of the age of the motor racing entrepreneur, of men such as Sir Frank Williams and Eddie Jordan. He believes that Formula One will be ruled from the boardrooms of big business. Not only will the mavericks of the sport be overwhelmed, but the implications for the British motorsport industry, which is worth £1.5 billion a year to the country and employs 150,000 people, could be far more serious. Formula One faces the possibility of a "brain drain" as companies, such as Toyota and Honda, poach the best talent but base their activities in their home states or convenient locations, such as Germany. Already, Honda is employing members of the now defunct Tyrrell team, but it has not given any commitment to working from Great Britain.

"Formula One has traditionally been located in the Golden Triangle bordered by Cambridge, Oxford and Reading, known as Motorsport Valley," Jenkins said, "but if manufacturers want to bring things in-house, they will have no particular commitment to Britain, only to their own needs and costs."

The human face of Formula One also faces extinction. Pioneers, such as Enzo Ferrari, founded a tradition of entrepreneurship that is continued today by men such as Williams, Jordan, Giancarlo Minardi and Peter Sauber.

Jenkins gave warning that the days when Williams could cadge tyres from rivals and conduct business from a telephone box to get his grand prix team on the grid would be replaced by corporations that want the worldwide publicity that is offered by Formula One. In the meantime, Toyota might have to buy out one of the independents to realise its ambitions.

"Formula One has traditionally been dominated by teams set up by entrepreneurs who have developed relatively small companies that can respond very quickly to the demands placed on them by Formula One racing," Jenkins added, "but the signs are that the motor manufacturers want more control. They want to differentiate their products in the marketplace from the competition and, to do that, they want their own teams. Now Toyota is entering, the question is how long before the other manufacturers in Formula One decide they have to do the same?"

Whatever happens, the prospects of another Eddie Jordan emerging to run an independent team in the present, expensive climate of Formula One seem to be remote. When Jordan ended his first season in Formula One in 1991, he was £4.5 million in debt and scoured the circuits for young and cheap drivers. In contrast, the British American Racing team starts this season with a five-year budget of £250 million and employs the second highest-paid driver in the sport, Jacques Villeneuve, on a £10 million salary.



Four years after seeking asylum, Dagne makes her senior women's international debut tomorrow

Refugee runs out of Africa into England team

David Powell on the Ethiopian athlete who made a brave dash for freedom

Dawn was just breaking and snow was beginning to fall out of a grey Durham sky when Birhan Dagne, two of her fellow-Ethiopian athletes and a coach slipped out of the university accommodation to which they had returned after the world cross-country championships the previous day. With just enough English to call a taxi, frightened and not knowing what fate might befall them, they headed for the local railway station while their team managers slept.

By mid-morning, the four had arrived at King's Cross, knowing nobody and nothing of the capital. All they could do was wait for an Ethiopian to pass by and ask for help. A woman, on her way to church, was the first they approached. Was she Ethiopian? "Yes," came the reply. Would she help these desperate runners on the run? "Yes," again. So began the process of seeking asylum in Great Britain as the woman escorted them to the nearest refugee centre.

Almost four years later, Dagne will become tomorrow the first African refugee to run for England. She has been selected for a senior women's team of three to contest the Coca-Cola international cross-country race in Belfast. Ironically, she could make her championship debut for Britain at the world cross-country championships in Belfast this March, competing against team-mates she abandoned in Durham on the last occasion that Britain hosted the event.

This could prove to be a landmark in British distance running. Paula Radcliffe and Jon Brown apart, Britain is anonymous at world-class in a section of athletics that is dominated by Africans. However, behind Dagne, there are Moroccan, Ethiopian and Somalian athletes living and competing in Britain and waiting for their chance.

Dagne, 20, seized her moment to escape Ethiopia without warning her parents, although she had been planning it for a month. There was fear among the once-dominant Amharas of persecution by the new coalition government and Dagne claims to have been severely beaten by a soldier while out training in preparation for Durham. After 46 months without seeing her parents, she said yesterday from her home in Bethnal Green: "I miss my family, I miss my country, I miss everything."

Nevertheless, making the best of it, she has married, learnt to speak English and has been granted asylum. By next year, she expects to have received the citizenship that she would need to compete at the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.

"It has been very hard, a new life without my family," Dagne said. She has met one of her brothers in Switzerland, but has not seen any of her four other siblings since leaving Ethiopia. "My family were very upset I did not tell anybody, but they are happy now that I run for Great Britain. I tell them I am happy because I am alive. In Ethiopia, maybe somebody would have killed me."

> 'She is a tough, single-minded lady to have achieved what she has in a strange country'

She recalls how, waiting on Durham station, she sat in fear. "We were waiting about an hour, a long, long time, and we were frightened," she said. "We thought we might be taken to prison or maybe killed."

Dagne's switch as an athlete from Ethiopia to Great Britain was cleared by the International Amateur Athletic Federation in November. "She must be a tough, single-minded lady to have achieved what she has in a strange country," Rita Brownlie, the England team manager, said.

Training in the British winter has been a shock to Dagne. "I do not like the cold," she said. "In Ethiopia, the sun shines for 12 months. It is a new life here in gloves." Just as it is a new life for her in an England vest.

BOXING: BIRMINGHAM HEAVYWEIGHT CAPITALISES ON KICK-START TO HIS CAREER

Reid gets British title chance

By Srikumar Sen, Boxing Correspondent

PELE REID, the Birmingham heavyweight, who is being tipped to follow in the footsteps of Lennox Lewis, will get the chance to underline his potential when he challenges Julius Francis, of Peckham, for the British championship at York Hall on January 30.

Francis was to have met Danny Williams, another Londoner, but, when the challenger pulled out with an eye injury, Reid was called in. He was in training to challenge Vitali Klitschko, of Ukraine, for the European title, but Frank Warren, the promoter, convinced him that the British title was more important. "Anyway, Klitschko will be accommodated after Pele beats Francis," Warren said.

Reid came to boxing at the age of 23 by way of kick boxing. His father, who named his first son Santos, wanted his second to take up football, but, despite his christian name, Pele Reid was more impressed by the exploits of Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee than the great Brazilian and took up martial arts at the age of 11.

"The kids I ran with in Aston were a hard lot and there was a chance I would get into trouble. That is why I chose another route and I'm proud of what I've achieved so far. I want to set a good example."

By 18, he had lifted the kick boxing world championship, after winning the European crown with a second-round knockout. When he turned to professional boxing, he joined Brendan Ingle, because he liked the style of boxing that the Sheffield trainer had taught Herol Graham and Naseem Hamed.

Reid is unbeaten in 13 contests and all his victories have been inside the distance. Eight have ended in the first round and only one has gone beyond three. Ingle thinks Francis will go out in two.

Both Ingle and Warren believe that Reid has the qualities to go all the way. "He is named after a famous man and now I expect him to make a name in his own right," Warren said. "He should be among the top ten in 18 months. Right now, he'd beat any American at his level."

Ingle agreed. "If he hits you, he knocks you out," he said. "He is so strong, you have to nail him to the floor to beat him."

If Reid lives up to expectations, his quick victories added to a natural charm and positive outlook should make him ideal for marketing when he reaches the top level.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Manchester Giants 129 Worthing Bears 88; Thames Valley Tigers 69 London Towers 81.

BOWLS

HOPTON-ON-SEA, Norfolk: World indoor championships: Singles: Third round: S Rees (Wales) bt R Newman (Eng) 7-2, 7-0, 7-1, 7-1.

CYCLING

ADELAIDE: Tour Down Under: Third stage (149km): 1, S O'Grady (Aus) 3hr 42min 12sec; 2, D Smith (Aus) at 5sec; 3, J Skibby (Den) same time; 4, M Blackstedt (Swe) 9; 5, F van Heesbroucke (Bel) 1:51. Leading overall positions: 1, O'Grady 8hr 30min 37sec; 2, Smith at 11sec; 3, Skibby same time; 4, Blackstedt 20; 5, E Zabel (Ger) 1:56.

FOOTBALL

Wednesday's late results

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Second division: Livingston 1 East Fife 0.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Challenge Cup: Second-round replay: Bishop Auckland 2 Farsley Celtic 4.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE CUP: First round, second leg: Baldock 4 Raunds 1 (agg: 3-1 after 90min; Baldock win 5-4 on agg).
FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Man City 2 Blackburn 3.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Bournemouth 0 Wycombe 0; Charlton 2 Northampton 3; Chelsea 3 Oxford 2; Ipswich 2 Swindon 1; Norwich 1 Reading 0; Southampton 1 Luton 0.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Birmingham 0 Sunderland 2; Leicester 2 Preston 2. First division: Middlesbrough 3 Barnsley 0; Port Vale 0 Wolverhampton 4. Second division: Huddersfield 0 Rotherham 2; Newcastle 0 Bradford 2; York 5 Scarborough 0. League Cup: Group three: Tranmere 4 Manchester City 3.
NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE: First division: Ramsbottom 1 Mossley 1.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third-round replays: Hartlepool 3 Barnet 0; Nottm Forest 2 West Brom 1.
ITALIAN LEAGUE: Venezia 3 Empoli 2.
SPANISH CUP: Fourth round, first leg: Athletic Bilbao 2 Racing Santander 2; Benidorm 0 Barcelona 1; Celta Vigo 0 Deportivo La Coruña 1; Espanol 4 Real Valladolid 2; Levante 0 Valencia 3; Real Betis 0 Real Mallorca 1; Real Sociedad 1 Atlético Madrid 2.
INTERNATIONAL MATCH: France 1 Morocco 0 (in Marseilles).

GOLF

PALM SPRINGS, California: Bob Hope Chrysler Classic: Leading first-round scores (United States unless stated): 63: T Pernice Jr, J Huston, B Bates. 64: J Freeman, J Kaye. 65: F Funk, R Mediate, B van Pelt. 66: J Carter, R Tway, F Allem (SA), P Jacobsen, S Pate. 67: D Stockton Jr, S Kendall, S McCarron, M Weir, P Goydos, G Hjertstedt (Swe), S Verplank, B Chamblee, C Perry, D Sutherland.

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Ayr Scottish Eagles 4 Bracknell Bees 3 (OT).
NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): New York Islanders 2 Florida 5, Dallas 4 Toronto 6, Anaheim 3 New Jersey 4.

RUGBY UNION

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Aberavon 20 Natal Wildebeest 14; Caerphilly 38 Georgia 17. Pool B: Bridgend 17 Gauteng Falcons 18; Newport 24 Blue Bulls 39.
CLUB MATCH: Cambridge Univ 42 RAF 21.

SNOOKER

NEWCASTLE: Nations Cup: Wales 6 Northern Ireland 5.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	U	Conditions: Piste	Off piste	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	78	Fair	Hard	Varied	Fine	5	[illegible]
Obergurgl	40	180	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	[illegible]	14/01
Söll	20	70	Good	Open	Heavy	Sun	[illegible]	14/01
St Anton	30	295	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	6	14/01
Canada								
Lake Louise	100	139	Good	[illegible]	Powder	Cloud	-3	21/01
France								
Alpe d'Huez	58	150	Fair	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	[illegible]	13/01
Argentière	50	110	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	1	14/01
La Clusaz	85	170	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	2	14/01
La Plagne	70	180	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	4	14/01
Les Arcs	68	180	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	1	14/01
Megève	45	135	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	3	14/01
Méribel	45	125	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Fine	1	14/01
Tignes	63	160	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	3	14/01
Val Thorens	70	130	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fine	4	14/01
Val d'Isère	63	130	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fine	4	14/01
Valmorel	44	128	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Italy								
Cervinia	45	160	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Fine	2	14/01
Cortina	45	80	[illegible]	[illegible]	Powder	Sun	1	14/01
Livigno	35	116	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	5	13/01
Norway								
Geilo	70	70	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	17/01
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	20	115	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	[illegible]	14/01
Davos	30	130	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Fine	[illegible]	14/01
Klosters	35	136	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Fine	[illegible]	14/01
Saas Fee	40	225	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	[illegible]	13/01
St Moritz	40	[illegible]	[illegible]	Open	Varied	Sun	[illegible]	14/01
Verbier	20	[illegible]	Good	Worn	Varied	Sun	5	14/01
Villars	30	[illegible]	Fair	Worn	Varied	Sun	[illegible]	14/01
Wengen	15	70	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	[illegible]	14/01
United States								
Aspen	25	123	Good	Open	Powder	Fine	[illegible]	21/01
Deer Valley	102	120	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	[illegible]	19/01

L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated
* denotes all-ticket

Nationwide League
Third division
* Mansfield v Rotherham (7.45)

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third round: Brighton v Coventry.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: West Ham United v Peterborough United (1.0).
FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Crewe Alexandra v Aston Villa (12.0); Leeds United v Middlesbrough (1.0).
LEAGUE OF WALES: Cwmbran v Afan Lido; Inter Cable-Tel v Haverfordwest.
FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Bray v Finn Harps; Bohemians v Shelbourne (7.45).
BASS IRISH CUP: Fifth round: Cliftonville v Crewe United.

RUGBY UNION

Welsh Challenge Trophy
Pool A
Neath v Edinburgh Reivers (7.0)
Pool B
Llanelli v Glasgow Caledonians (7.0)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Club match
Salford v Barrow (8.0)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Milton Keynes Lions v Manchester Giants (7.30); Sheffield Sharks v Edinburgh Rocks (7.45).
HOCKEY: World cities women's indoor tournament (at Bell's SC, Perth, 9.0): Sydney v Toronto, Perth v Glasgow

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 40 –More on Responding in a Suit

So far, all the responses in a suit to a one-level opening have been fairly straightforward. You have simply bid your longest suit at lowest level (and we have established what to do when you had "two longest suits").

Sometimes it is more complicated. Your first question should be: "Is my responding hand worth one or two bids?" With fewer than 11 HCP, game is unlikely and your hand is worth only one bid. If partner makes a minimum rebid, you want to close the contract below game level. With 11 or more HCP, even if partner makes a minimum rebid, you want to make a second response which invites him to consider a game contract.

Consider the following two hands after partner has opened One Heart:

(A)		(B)	
♠	K J 7 3	♠	K J 7 3
♡	8 7	♡	8 7
◇	A J 6 3	◇	A J 6 3
♣	7 6 4	♣	Q 6 4

On both hands you respond One Spade. But with *Hand (A)* if partner rebids Two Hearts you will pass; if he rebids Two Clubs you will give simple preference to Two Hearts (more on this later). You have a minimum response; he has shown no extra values; you will sign off. However, *Hand (B)* is stronger. Now you are worth a game invitation. If he rebids Two Hearts or Two Clubs you are worth Two No-Trumps. This shows similar values to an immediate Two No-Trump response but you showed your four-card spade suit first.

If your hand is worth only one bid then priority must be given to showing major suits.

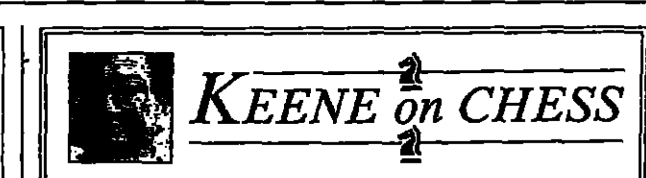
Consider these hands after partner has opened One Heart:

(C)		(D)		(E)	
♠	K J 4 3	♠	K J 4 3	♠	K J 4 3
♡	8 7	♡	K 8	♡	K 8
◇	Q 10 7 6 5	◇	Q 10 7 6 5	◇	Q 10 7 6 5
♣	7 6	♣	7 6	♣	K 6

Hand (C) does not have the 9 HCP necessary for a two-level response, so you must respond One Spade. Although *Hand (D)* has 9 HCP it doesn't have the 11 necessary to intend to make two bids, so again start with the major suit. Respond One Spade. However, with *Hand (E)* you have enough to invite game facing a minimum rebid from partner. So bid your longest suit first. Respond Two Diamonds, intending to bid Two Spades if partner rebids Two Hearts.

Geir Helgemo and Tor Helness of Norway continue to dominate the 1999 MaCallan international pairs, being played at the White House Hotel, Regent's Park, London. They have led from the start of the tournament.

Scores after seven rounds: 1, Helgemo and Helness 290 VPs; 2, Chemla and Levy (France) 255 VPs; 3 equal, Auken and von Arnim (Germany) 254 VPs and Lauria and Versace (Italy); 5, Chagas and Weinstein (Brazil/US) 252 VPs.



KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Kasparov brilliance

In the fourth round of the elite tournament at Wijk aan Zee in Holland, the world's top two ranked players, Garry Kasparov and Viswanathan Anand, both continued their winning ways. They still share the lead with 3½/4. However, it was Kasparov's win against Veselin Topalov, the Bulgarian grandmaster, which seized the attention of spectators and experts alike. In a brilliant sacrificial onslaught Kasparov sacrificed a rook to smoke out his opponent's king and hunted it across the board to its doom. What distinguished this combination were a number of piquant moments where Kasparov played quiet, non-forcing moves in his victory march, despite being a huge amount of material in arrears.

White: Garry Kasparov
Black: Veselin Topalov
Wijk aan Zee 1999

Pire Defence

	White	Black
1	e4	d6
2	d4	Nf6
3	Nc3	g6
4	Be3	Bg7
5	Qd2	c6
6	f3	b5
7	Nge2	Nbd7
8	Bh6	Bxh6
9	Qxh6	Bb7
10	a3	e5
11	0-0-0	Qe7
12	Kb1	a6
13	Nc1	0-0-0
14	Nb3	exd4
15	Rxd4	c5
16	Rd1	Nb6
17	g3	Kb8
18	Na5	Ba8
19	Bh3	d5
20	Qf4+	Ka7
21	Rhe1	d4
22	Nd5	Nbxd5
23	exd5	Qd6
24	Rxd4	cxd4
25	Re7+	Kb6
26	Qxd4+	Kxa5
27	b4+	Ka4
28	Qc3	Qxd5
29	Ra7	Bb7
30	Rxb7	Qc4
31	Qxf6	Kxa3
32	Qxa6+	Kxb4
33	c3+	Kxc3
34	Qa1+	Kd2
35	Qb2+	Kd1
36	Bf1	Rd2
37	Rd7	Rxd7
38	Bxc4	bxc4
39	Qxh8	Rd3
40	Qa8	c3
41	Qa4+	Ke1
42	f4	f5
43	Kc1	Rd2
44	Qa7	Black resigns

Diagram of final position

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

THE Wijk aan Zee games can be followed on www.chess2.lostcity.nl/hoogovens/

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

STROOL
a. To mimic unkindly
b. A three-legged stool
c. A stream

WEDDELL
a. A seal
b. A sharp turn at skiing
c. A Teutonic hero

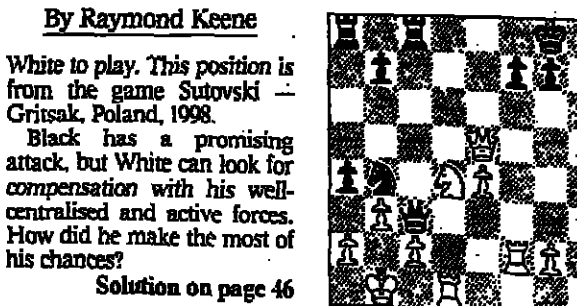
ZUG
a. Waterproofed leather
b. An Albanian pub
c. Z in the Lydian alphabet

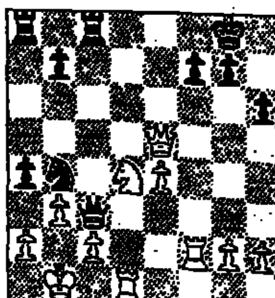
SHAGGERY
a. Conspicuous idleness
b. A breeding colony
c. A rough tweed

Answers on page 46

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene





White to play. This position is from the game Sutovski — Gritsak, Poland, 1998.

Black has a promising attack, but White can look for compensation with his well-centralised and active forces. How did he make the most of his chances?

Solution on page 46

FOOTBALL

West heading in direction of Newcastle

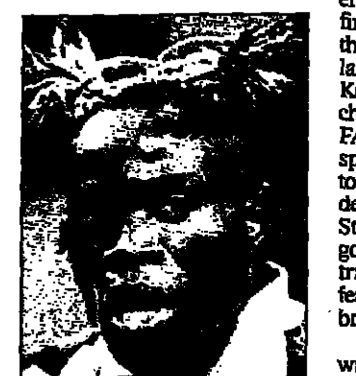
By George Caulkin and Richard Hobson

NEWCASTLE United directors were understood to have persuaded Taribo West of the merits of a permanent transfer to Tyneside last night after agreeing a £4.2 million fee with Internazionale for the Nigeria defender.

West had previously stated his preference for a loan arrangement after falling foul of Mircea Lucescu, the Serie A club's Romanian coach. Having finally contacted West, who is preparing for Nigeria's African Nations' Cup qualifying match with Burundi on Saturday, United were confident enough of a positive outcome to reserve a room in a Newcastle hotel for the Lagos-born centre half. A medical team has also been put on standby, although West's international commitments will delay his arrival.

West, who won the Uefa Cup with Internazionale last season, has not started a league match for almost seven weeks, saying that Lucescu has "put me in the shadows". Newcastle were first alerted of his availability last month when Michel Basilevitch, his adviser, travelled to England to talk to interested parties. Ironically, Liverpool's interest in West has cooled only because their manager, Gérard Houllier, is confident of signing Steve Howey, of Newcastle, under freedom of contract this summer.

Middlesbrough's decision to dispense with the services of Marco Branca has met with a querulous response from the Italian centre forward, who claims to know nothing about his supposed retirement as a result of a serious knee injury. The FA Carling Premiership club issued a statement on Wednesday, saying that it had "reluctantly" accepted medical advice that a knee injury sustained by Branca last April had brought a premature end to his career.


West: available

Branca, 34, said yesterday: "I don't know why the club is saying this. I'm doing rehabilitation work in Milan, but I'll be up in Middlesbrough in a few weeks to talk to the club."

Wolverhampton Wanderers, of the Nationwide League first division, have appealed to the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) to release Robbie Keane from the world youth championships in April. The FAI have so far failed to respond to a request by Wolves to ignore Keane for the under-20 competition in Nigeria. Steve Bull, the club's record goalscorer, will return to light training next week after initial fears that a knee injury would bring his career to a close.

Moussa Saib could be on his way out of White Hart Lane after defying George Graham, the Tottenham Hotspur manager, and flying to join the Algeria squad for their game against Tunisia on Sunday. Graham will contact the Football Association for guidance on dealing with Saib's "disappearing" act after saying: "He has shown a lack of respect to the club and the fans and, without question, he'll be seriously disciplined."

The agent of Marko Viduka has claimed that the Celtic forward is "sick and tired" of the club's hard line over his return to Parkhead and will consider legal action to resolve the ongoing dispute over his £3 million transfer from Croatia Zagreb. Viduka is desperate to resume his playing career after recuperating from the emotional stress that he insisted lay behind his walkout after just one training session in Glasgow.

However, Celtic's continued insistence on him receiving his hefty signing-on fee — believed to be as much as £1.5 million — in instalments while he proves his long-term commitment to the club has left Viduka exasperated.

Lombardo adds to Palace abdications

ATTILIO LOMBARDO, the Crystal Palace midfield player, is expected to complete a move to Lazio today for a fee of about £500,000 (Russell Kempson writes). The former Juventus and Sampdoria player flew to Rome for discussions with Lazio officials yesterday.

Lombardo's move is the latest in a series of departures from Selhurst Park as Mark Goldberg, the Palace chairman, attempts to cut costs at the Nationwide League first division club. Marcus Bent has joined Port Vale for £375,000 and Matt Jansen was bought by Blackburn Rovers for £4.1 million on Monday.

"Attilio served us well," Goldberg said. "We're sorry he is leaving, but it is the same situation as it was with Matt. If we are not going to be in the Premiership next season, then it was going to be very difficult to keep Attilio."

Goldberg indicated that he was looking to trim further the first-team squad. "We've got 40 players and should really have only 22 or 23," he said. "We've got to provide opportunities for the youngsters and make sure we're running an efficient organisation.

"I'm acting not under crisis management, but purely good business management. I've learnt a lot here and I thought that throwing money at the equation was the right way to go. Now, we might have to take one step backward to move two steps forward."

Lombardo, 33, the former Italy international, joined Palace from Juventus for £1.6 million in August 1997.


HUW EVANS

Hollins, left, and Curtis have revived a club that had been in turmoil for years until they came together six months ago

Reborn Swansea take wing

David Powell on the men bringing back the glory days to Vetch Field

John Hollins, Swansea City manager, house in Chelsea, jokes that it costs him £4.20 every time he wants to get back into Wales, such is the expense of crossing the Severn Bridge, but that he would be happy to pay a fiver if it meant beating Derby County at home in the FA Cup tomorrow. Either way, this is small money compared with the £370,000 it took to pack Alan Curtis off out of Wales 20 years ago.

Curtis departed Swansea for Leeds United in 1979 as the club's record transfer sale and the League's joint-top scorer from the previous season, but he stayed at Elland Road for only 18 months. Before leaving the Vetch Field, Curtis had helped Swansea from the lower end of the fourth division into the second.

While Curtis was away, Swansea stayed put. Within six months of his return, bought for half the fee that he was sold for after flopping at Leeds, the Swans were in the first division. The following season, managed by John Toshack, they led the league for a while and remained in contention for the championship until April.

A string of defeats towards the end saw Swansea finish in sixth place, but still the club's highest League finish. Now, as the fourth-round tie with Derby approaches, Curtis, in his fourth spell with Swansea — three as a player, now as assistant manager — says that these are the best days at the Vetch since the two-season stay in the top division.

"The hairs on the back of your neck stand up and you get a tingling sensation," Curtis said. "The last time we had that was when the club was in the old first division." Since then, keeping count of the managers has kept busy the fingers of fans who remember using them to tally Curtis's goals [32 in the 1977-78 season].

FA CUP

Swansea have had 12 changes of manager in 15 years, three parting company with the club in an eight-month spell prior to the arrival of Hollins last July. Two incumbents in the past three years, Kevin Cullis and Micky Adams, each survived less than a fortnight. Only 15 months ago, the club was in turmoil and Curtis could barely believe what was happening.

"It was becoming a laughing stock, bordering on farce," Curtis recalled. "When Alan Cork took over, I was doing the youth team and the first team. There was nobody else left." When Cork went last summer, Hollins was installed, unperturbed at Swansea's reputation, glad to be a manager again, ten years after he had last held such a post.

For three years until 1988, Hollins managed Chelsea. Though he still has a home there, to which he returns once a week, he spends most nights at his flat in Swansea. Hollins insists that he had not thought of packing in almost as soon as he had arrived as, after six matches, Swansea were one place off the bottom. Now, halfway up the table and after eliminating Millwall, Stoke City and West Ham United from the FA Cup, Hollins is no dying Swan.

"I came here because this was an opportunity for me to use the experience I had from playing, coaching and managing — some good experiences, some bitter ones," Hollins said. "What I have learnt is how a club should be run and how a club should not be run. We have put that into practice, but we have only just started.

"Alan and I have been together for six months. I have not bought, loaned or sold anybody. We are just trying get our experience into them and make them play. It was a sad place when I arrived, but not now."

Until decamping to Swansea, Hollins had spent all his football life with clubs in London. With Chelsea, he played in two FA Cup finals, the first in 1967, against Tottenham Hotspur, when Curtis was at school in South Wales. "In those days, you were either a Spurs, Manchester United or Chelsea supporter," Curtis recalled, noting that he had gone with Spurs because "I was a Jimmy Greaves man".

Not a Hollins man? Not then. It took Curtis 21 years to come round to the idea, but now they are a team, Swansea are on the rise again. Derby beware.

Financial lift for Conference tailenders

Non-League Football
By Walter Gammie

THE announcement of a record sponsorship deal with Nationwide yesterday has enhanced the status of the Football Conference. Nevertheless, the health of a league must be judged by that of its clubs and too many of these find life a perpetual struggle. The news that Farnborough Town, who are bottom of the table, have engineered a deal that they hope will secure their future in the Nationwide Conference is most welcome, therefore.

A London-based consortium is prepared to settle the bills that forced the club into voluntary liquidation, turn it into a public limited company, lay down a five-a-side pitch and extend the clubhouse. Should Farnborough keep their Conference place, the consortium has also promised to bring Cherrywood Road up to Nationwide League standard.

Alan Taylor, the manager, said: "It's all agreed in principle. It's a bit like a house sale. We've exchanged but not completed. We're almost there."

Taylor has been promised resources to buy players and he expects to have newcomers in the side away to Kingstonian tomorrow. "We have spent the past ten months selling, selling and not replacing," he said. "Now, we've got the chance to bring in one or two fresh faces."

The financial problems that have dogged Barrow's first season back in the Conference will come to a head on Monday when they face a winding-up order from a company that did work on the ground in the summer. The dismissal of Owen Brown, the manager, after Barrow's 2-1 win over Welling United lifted them to sixteenth place, had as much to do with the belief that Shane Westley, the former Lincoln City manager, assisted by John Beck as "football consultant", can work better within tight budgetary constraints than the poor results and disciplinary record — five sendings-off and 65 bookings this season — that were cited by the club.

Paul Alcock, the convalescent FA Carling Premiership referee, left his mark on the FA Umbro Trophy third-round tie between Kingstonian and Kettering Town on Tuesday. Kingstonian took full advantage of Alcock's dismissal of Lee Hudson, when Kettering were leading 1-0, to run away to a 5-2 victory.

RUGBY UNION

England put the case for leniency

By Mark Souster

ENGLAND will discover next week what penalty, if any, the International Rugby Board (IRB) intends to impose in its latest sparring match with Twickenham. Having been found guilty last week of "conduct prejudicial to the interests of the board", the Rugby Football Union (RFU) met yesterday's deadline by submitting its defence and plea for leniency.

The IRB had taken its action because, it said, the union had reneged on the commitment to support the board in its stance against England's leading clubs, who, in a legal submission to the European Commission in April, challenged its authority and control over certain areas of the game. In essence, the union's lawyers argued yesterday that Twickenham did not have a case to answer and that its behaviour, while perhaps regrettable, had not damaged the board and therefore no fine or other punishment was warranted. The board disciplinary committee has indicated already that it will not suspend England from the World Cup, but the prospect of a heavy fine remains.

The English clubs want to be able to negotiate their own commercial agreements for competitions in which they participate and they maintain that the board's control amounts to restrictive practice. In a separate case last month, the board withheld a £60,000 grant to the union for failing to prevent the unofficial cross-border Anglo-Welsh friendly matches.


Morrison: Murrayfield date

Richmond are to appeal against the dismissal of Robbie Hutton, a flank forward, during the Allied Dunbar Premiership game away to Gloucester. Hutton was sent off in the final minutes of the match for allegedly stamping, but, having studied a video recording, the club says that it will defend Hutton at a disciplinary hearing.

Gloucester Spartans opted yesterday not to appeal against a decision to ban its entire first team after a brawl during a league match against Cinderford. Thirteen players have been suspended for a fortnight, starting on Monday, while two others, Bobby Fowke and Stuart Brazil, were banned for 35 days after being sent off during the game, which was abandoned five minutes before half-time by the referee. Cinderford were exonerated of any blame.

Malcolm Pearce, the millionaire owner of Bristol, agreed yesterday that the protracted nature of merger talks with London Scottish was harming the game, but insisted that the action was necessary to safeguard Bristol's future. Pearce said that without a guarantee of promotion to the top division of whatever structure is in place next season, he has had to take his controversial action.

Ireland's summer tour to Australia has been reduced from six to four matches because the Irish RFU could not guarantee the availability of its strongest side for the full tour.

Three of England's Five Nations Championship matches this season will be controlled by referees from the southern hemisphere. Only their first match, against Scotland, will have a European in charge — David McHugh, of Ireland.

Ed Morrison, the leading English referee, will be in action on the championship's opening weekend, on February 6, when he takes charge of Scotland against Wales at Murrayfield.

FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP REFEREES: Feb 6: Ireland v France (P Marshall, Aus); Scotland v Wales (E Morrison, Eng). Feb 20: England v Scotland (D McHugh, Ire); Wales v Ireland (S Young, Aus). Mar 6: Ireland v England (S Walsh, NZ); France v Wales (J Fleming, Scot). Mar 20: England v France (C Hawke, NZ); Scotland v Ireland (D Bevan, Wales). Apr 10: France v Scotland (C Thomas, Wales). Apr 11: Wales v England (A Watson, SA)

Greed supplants dignity in soul of the Five Nations

GERALD DAVIES


Rugby Union Commentary

Evoking an image so redolent of the past merely reinforced the regret for the way things were and how they have so uncomfortably changed. Allan Hosie, Brian Baister and Bill Beaumont stood with pints of warm beer in their hands and declared that the Five Nations Championship, in its traditional form, had not disappeared after all. England were no longer the pariahs of Europe.

The thin smiles in the photograph of the chairman of the Five Nations Committee (Hosie) with the Rugby Football Union chairman (Baister) and negotiator (Beaumont) seemed to suggest that no problem is so great that it cannot be settled with a pie and a pint at the Drum and Monkey. England were reinstated, with one or two provisos, as full members.

This is the second time that the Five Nations Championship has been put at risk. In July 1996, there was a sinking feeling of disbelief when a similar expulsion took place, which was followed by joy and relief when an agreement was reached and the championship was back on course. The events of this past week have simply been tiresome and irritating.

Who are we meant to believe? Did any meetings take place or didn't they? If not, why not? How is it that men who are appointed as administrators cannot arrange times and dates that are mutually convenient for meetings? How is it that, after some kind of protracted discussions, a decision is reached one day, only, after a sudden dash to Glasgow, for it to be overturned 24 hours later? Are not the participating parties bringing the game into disrepute?

As ever, money is at the root of the problem. Chasing the almighty dollar has been compounded by the fact that the rugby authorities, aware of the immense popularity of international rugby, have been unable to put a price on the value of their property, the tournament involving England, France, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. They all knew that the game was valuable to television, but how valuable? Fuelled by panic, greed was in the air in 1996, as it is now.

This was why a Five Nations Committee was instituted, to co-ordinate the efforts of all countries concerned so that they could all benefit. Because their television contract is out of kilter with the others, France could not immediately be a party to the negotiations, but had committed themselves firmly to the principle. England believed that, because of their higher percentage share of the potential television audience, they had a claim on the greater share of the money. They decided to pursue their own individual contract for all matches at Twickenham.

They may have had a good case, except that the property for sale was the Five Nations Championship in its entirety, not bits of it. Each country is dependent on the others; there is a mutuality of interest.

The argument goes that the championship cannot do without England. This is true — but the championship cannot exist without the others either. Take out any one country and the tournament is significantly less attractive.

For example, Wales are down on their luck at the moment, but we only need to go back a couple of decades to appreciate what their absence would have meant then. The tournament would have been substantially devalued.

> 'Take out any one country and the tournament is significantly less attractive'

The problem is that so many — from the players, to the administrators at Twickenham — repeat endlessly the axiom that the championship cannot do without England, and believe it so intensely, that they are creating the impression that it is so. Critical though their presence is to the tournament, they are not, if push came to shove — as it clearly did this week — indispensable: certainly not in the existing unstable climate.

What the union in England will also have come to understand is that it could be isolated. In July 1996, it may have thought that it had outgrown the championship and that competition against the southern- hemisphere nations would approximate more to its standing in world rugby. The prospect was mooted that, with France, they could fashion an alternative Five Nations Championship to include the three nations of the southern hemisphere. After England's display last summer and the turmoil it is suffering in its relationship with the International Rugby Board, those three countries are no longer so enamoured of the idea.

Yet why, in any case, should a championship that is so unquestionably appealing be put in such jeopardy? The time may indeed come, though it is a long way off, when there is a sufficient number of countries playing rugby at the highest level that some may wish to pursue their independent whims and to determine their own destinies without the Five Nations Championship. Rugby may then need to consider another structure — but that moment has not arrived.

For the time being, it is in rugby's best interests to act collectively in order to broaden the game globally. This will not occur if countries choose to act selfishly.

By then, any sense that decisions may be determined in bar-room conviviality will be long gone. At the moment, with so much acrimony born of past grievances, one can only wish things to be as they once were. At least such hobnobbing chumminess ensured that common sense and honour prevailed. Then, the game was harmonious and had a deep sense of its own dignity.

BOWLS

Players benefit as seeds fall

By David Rhys Jones

THE failure of the top-ranked players in the world indoor singles championship at Potters Leisure Resort in Norfolk has delighted those who have campaigned for making the sport's televised events more accessible.

The top 16 players on the World Bowls Tour ranking list were seeded through to the second round, but only six survived their opening matches.

Mervyn King, the No 4 seed, from Norfolk, who was beaten by Alex Marshall, an unseeded Scot, on Sunday, admitted that there is very little to choose between those in the top 16 and the rest.

"We were just lucky to be in the right place at the right time to earn the points that have put us in pole position, but there are lots of good bowlers around and I'm not at all surprised by what's been happening," he said.

Yet there is another factor. This year, because the field has been increased to 48, the seeds, in their opening games, came up against opponents who had not only already played a match on the portable rink, but whose confidence was boosted by their first-round successes. John Price, the No 5 seed, who was beaten by Mark McMahon on Tuesday, claimed some credit on behalf of the Professional Bowls Association (PBA), of which he is chairman.

"The PBA has been campaigning for more qualifying events and for competitors who are just out of the top 16 to have their chance," he said yesterday. "As a result of the expansion of the field, it's a much stronger event and the eclipse of the seeds was quite predictable."

Even though Steve Rees, the No 7 seed, 38, from Swansea, defeated Robert Newman, the British champion, on Wednesday night, the average age of the competitors left in the tournament remains below 30.

NETBALL

Essex suffer setback

ESSEX Met's hopes of retaining their English Counties League championship have been dealt a blow after they failed in their bid to rearrange their final match against Middlesex, the leaders, which is scheduled for April 10 (Cathy Harris writes).

The champions will be missing Amanda Newton, their Commonwealth Games bronze medal-winning goalkeeper, who will be playing for a New Zealand club in March and April.

Despite being offered several dates by Essex Met, Middlesex, who will be without Helen Lonsdale, another player to accept an offer to play in New Zealand, have struggled to reach a suitable alternative.

Pat Meadows, the Essex Met coach, said: "Initially, I was a bit peeved, but now I've got used to the idea. We're simply going to have to work our socks off."

Although the All England Netball Association had agreed for two matches between the leading contenders to be rearranged, Derbyshire's match against Bedfordshire will also go ahead as scheduled, despite Derbyshire being without Naomi Siddall and Olivia Murphy, both of whom will be in New Zealand.

OLYMPICS

British official accuses Salt Lake

By Our Sports Staff

A LEADING British Olympic official claimed yesterday that Salt Lake City should lose its right to stage the 2002 Winter Games, but admitted it was not practical.

Simon Clegg, the chief executive of the British Olympic Association, said that unless there were drastic changes to the bidding process, the Olympic movement would lose any credibility it still retained.

He claimed that members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) behaved in an improper manner during their visits to Great Britain during Manchester's bid for the 1996 and 2000 Games, but a lack of evidence prevented an inquiry from being launched.

His revelations followed more damaging allegations surrounding the Salt Lake City bid, with one member of the bidding team claiming that a suitcase containing $5,000 (£3,000) was carried to wine and dine members of the IOC.

Pirjo Haggman, of Finland, has already resigned her seat on the IOC ahead of the official inquiry into the Salt Lake City bid and a further 12 members are set to follow when the findings are published next week. Clegg said: "In a perfect world, Salt Lake City wouldn't be allowed to host the 2002 Games, but the practicalities mean that finding an alternative at such short notice would be almost impossible."

He said that suspicion had not been pointed at the three recent British bids — Birmingham (1992) and Manchester (1996 and 2000) — but added: "There were certain allegations made about IOC members while they were in Manchester. The complaints were forwarded to the IOC, but were hard to substantiate."

Junichi Yamaguchi, a senior official in the Nagano team that bid successfully for the 1998 Winter Olympics, claimed yesterday that records concerning its bid were destroyed after IOC members asked that they be kept secret. He said $14 million (£8.5 million) was spent on entertaining 62 IOC officials, but added: "We were concerned that if the documents were made public, it could cause unpleasantness for the IOC."

GOLF: FORMER ENGLISH AMATEUR CHAMPION AMONG LEADERS AFTER FIRST DAY OF SOUTH AFRICAN OPEN

Garbutt makes most of early start

PAUL SEVERN / ALLSPORT



Els, of South Africa, watched by a packed gallery, tees off during his round at Stellenbosch yesterday. He started promisingly, but finished the day four shots behind the leaders

From John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent in Stellenbosch

THERE are days at a golf tournament when the leaders are determined not so much by one player's edge over another as by other factors. The day of the first round of the South African Open was one such. The weather made a big difference. Those who started early played in calm conditions, but those who played later faced a gusty wind and intense heat as the temperature rose to nearly 40C.

Furthermore, in the sharp light that is a feature of this part of the Cape, 20 miles east of Cape Town, it is harder to read the lines on the greens when the sun is directly overhead than when it is lower in the sky. Putting was harder, therefore, for the later starters.

Ronnie McCann, who was born in South Africa but left for the United States when he was 13, Ian Garbutt, the former English Amateur champion, who has not had a distinguished career as a professional, and Sven Struver, the Germany World Cup player, are the leaders after recording rounds of 67. All three started their first rounds between 6.30am and 7.20am and were back in the clubhouse before midday. It could be more difficult for them today, when they tee off between 11.30am and noon.

Garbutt, whose best finish in a European tour event was seventh in the Dutch Open last year, went to bed at 9pm on Wednesday, woke seven hours later and was on the first tee at 6.50am. He played steadily, birdieing three of his first four holes before three-putting from 70ft on the 6th. Coming home was harder and he added only two more birdies.

Garbutt finished only 38th in the Alfred Dunhill SA PGA Championship at Houghton golf club in Johannesburg last Sunday, but he was suffering from a stomach upset there and he seemed to be a different player on this occasion. His putting, in particular, had improved. "It can really blow here," Garbutt said. "We were lucky to have the best of the weather."

Nick Faldo also started early, at 7.10am, and was furious with himself by the time that he had finished because he felt he had failed to capitalise on the good conditions. There is no pleasing some people. Faldo's 70, one under par, was seven strokes better than his opening round in Johannesburg and contained only three bogies. When was the last time he outscored Ernie Els? "It was a piece of cake," Faldo said. "There is nothing going on out there. The greens are holding. It's there for the taking. Par is 68 max right now. Ernie Els will make mincemeat of it."

Els set off at 11.50am, just after Faldo had finished. For his first seven holes, he looked as though he might, indeed, do as Faldo had suggested, holing putts of 30ft on the 5th and 25ft on the 6th. However, the 8th stopped him in his tracks. He drove into the left rough, took three to reach the green and then missed a six-footer for par. After that, he went off the boil, coming home in 37, one over par, and failed to get his par at the 18th.

Peter Baker was another who experienced a thoroughly frustrating day. "Some days, a 72 is a really great score," Baker, who was playing a couple of groups ahead of Els, said. Again and again, he saved himself with his magical short game. Four times on his homeward half alone, he rescued his par. He described his round as a battle.

Paul McGinley, who started at 12.20pm, ten minutes ahead of Anthony Wall, went round in 69, which was notable because he was one of very few to score well so late in the day and because he had a hole in one on the 7th. Wall's scores for the 12th, 13th and 14th were 6,1,6 — against a par of 5,3,5.

"It was a different course this afternoon," Els said. "You never know in the Cape. It might rain tomorrow."

That is not very likely. The forecast is for more scorching heat, with temperatures reaching 40C. The day could again belong to those who have an early start.

SCORES FROM STELLENBOSCH

LEADING FIRST-ROUND SCORES (South Africa unless stated): 67: R McCann (US), I Garbutt (Eng), S Struver (Ger). 68: A Cejka (Ger), J Kingston. 69: D Frost, S Pappas, M Mouland (Wales), R Kaplan, H Alberts, I Palmer, A Roestoff, D Faught, P McGinley (Eng). 70: C Kamps, N Faldo (Eng), P Lonard (Aus), J Hobday, R May (US), S Leaney (Aus), B Vaughan, C Whitelaw, I Garrido (Sp), M Gortana, C Hainline (US). 71: E Els, M A Martin (Sp), D Botes, P Sjoland (Swe), S Allan (Aus), R Gonzalez (Arg), P Blaikie, M McNulty (Zim), W Coetsee, A Pitts (US), S Tinning (Den), R Wessels, J Singh (India), P Nyman (Swe), J Bickerton (Eng), M Roe (Eng), G Owen (US), B Pappas, I Hutchings, S Daniels, D Gammon, R Whittaker (US), B Fouchee, H Thül (Ger). Other scores: 72: B Langer (Ger), I Woosnam (Wales), T Bjorn (Den), S Hansen (Den), A Coltart (Scot), P Broadhurst (Eng). 73: A Wall (Eng). 78: P-U Johansson (Swe).

SPORT IN BRIEF

RFL to take final north of border

■ **RUGBY LEAGUE:** The 2000 Challenge Cup final will be held at Murrayfield, the home of Scottish rugby union. The Rugby Football League (RFL) announced the decision yesterday, which sees the game's showpiece occasion move north of the border for the first time in its 103-year history. Apart from during the Second World War, the final has been staged at Wembley every year since 1929, but, with the stadium being redeveloped, the RFL was forced to look for a new venue. The game is scheduled for April 29 next year.

■ **CRICKET:** Glamorgan have joined forces with Gloucestershire, Somerset and Worcestershire to form a reciprocal quadrangular membership scheme that will allow members of all four counties to watch championship cricket free of charge at all other grounds within the group. Anyone who joins any of the four counties will, on production of their valid membership card, be entitled to free admission to matches being staged by any of the other three counties. The arrangement applies only to county championship cricket and matches that involve the member's county playing away at any of the other three counties are excluded.

■ **MOTOR RALLYING:** Volkswagen is set to make British Rally Championship history in 1999 by fielding a diesel-engined Golf in the series. The Golf TDI will be driven by Neil Simpson and will form part of a three-pronged attack on the British championship.

■ **CYCLING:** Stuart O'Grady, the winner of the Prutour, Great Britain's leading professional race, last year and a leader of the 1998 Tour de France, took the third stage and the overall lead of the Tour Down Under in Australia yesterday. Riding in his own country, O'Grady won the 149-kilometre stage by 5sec from Duncan Smith, also of Australia.

CRICKET: WORLD CHAMPIONS FINALLY OFF THE MARK WITH THRILLING VICTORY IN TRIANGULAR ONE-DAY COMPETITION

Sri Lankans grow weary of debate over Muralitharan

By Michael Henderson

AS ENGLAND'S cricketers enjoyed a rare day off yesterday, their opponents in the triangular one-day tournament were trying to patch up problems of their own. The Australians, reeling from the shock of Ricky Ponting's exclusion from the side after his involvement in a nightclub brawl, have lost Steve Waugh to a pulled hamstring, while Sri Lanka resent the treatment of Muttiah Muralitharan, their star off spinner.

Waugh, the captain of the Australia one-day team, carried his injury into the tournament and missed the first three games, when Shane Warne led the side. In Hobart, where Sri Lanka won the latest game by three wickets, to gain their first victory, Warne again took over the captaincy after Waugh withdrew.

With Ponting in the doghouse and Michael Bevan nursing a groin strain, they have summoned Stuart Law, the Queensland and Essex batsman, and Michael Kasprowicz, the seam bowler, for the game against England at the Adelaide Oval next Tuesday, Australia Day. Kasprowicz replaces Bradley Young, the off spinner, who has an ankle injury.

On Saturday Sri Lanka play England. The big question is whether Ross Emerson and Tony McQuillan, two of the umpires who called Muralitharan for throwing during Sri Lanka's tour in 1995, will call him again. They are standing in the match and the issue remains extremely sensitive.

Darrell Hair's decision to stand himself down from the umpires' panel for this tournament — and his imminent disrepute charge, brought against him for calling Muralitharan's bowling action "diabolical" in a recent book — has not banished this difficult subject. The whole of Australia, or at least that part of it which takes an interest in cricket, is talking about it.

The whispering has not stopped since the Sri Lankans arrived in this country. Some umpires are believed to side with Hair, so it would be something short of a sensation, though still an extraordinary event, if Muralitharan were called on Saturday. Peter van der Merwe, the match referee, will have to mention his abnormal action in his report at the end of the tournament and the International Cricket Council will once again be presented with evidence requiring some form of judgment.

Muralitharan is thoroughly fed up with the whole business. As soon as he came on to bowl in the first match in Brisbane, spectators called "no ball" and the jeering has not stopped. Arjuna Ranatunga, the captain, feels that his bowler may not want to tour Australia again.

"It's so unfortunate that a brilliant bowler who has taken 200 wickets, every time he goes into the field he has this problem", Ranatunga said. "Ultimately, what will happen is that people like Murali will never tour Australia. The younger generation will never be able to see him bowling. What if we do the same thing when some brilliant cricketer comes to Colombo — if he was hooted from the day he started bowling? It's not the right thing for a sportsman. Why is it only happening here? I'm really disappointed with the public this time.

"When we came last time, the public backed us and the media backed us. This time, it is different. I don't know what it is or where it comes from. Something is wrong somewhere. Murali has played for eight years and only once had a problem. That was here. If someone is having a problem, then the first thing they have to do is come to the captain and the manager. No one has spoken to me about it anywhere. No one has spoken to the manager."

PHIL HILLYARD



Jayasuriya and Mahanama celebrate after they had combined to end the innings of Mark Waugh for 65

SCOREBOARD FROM HOBART

HOBART (Sri Lanka won toss): Sri Lanka beat Australia by three wickets

AUSTRALIA

M E Waugh c Mahanama b Jayasuriya	[illegible]
†A C Gilchrist b Vaas	12
G S Blewett c Mahanama b Wickremasinghe	1
D S Lehmann c Jayawardene b Jayasuriya	51
S Lee c Chandana b Muralitharan	18
*S R Waugh c Jayawardene b Jayasuriya	20
M G Bevan c Kaluwitharana b Muralitharan	18
B P Julian c and b Vaas	7
S K Warne c Chandana b Vaas	5
A C Dale not out	7
G D McGrath not out	1
Extras (lb 2, w 3)	5
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs)	210

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-20, 2-25, 3-118, 4-138, 5-153, 6-185, 7-198, 8-198, 9-206.

BOWLING: Vaas 10-1-27-3; Wickremasinghe 8-1-20-1; Muralitharan 10-1-42-2; Jayawardene 4-0-20-0; Chandana 7-0-44-0; Jayasuriya 10-0-47-3; Tillekeratne 1-0-8-0

SRI LANKA

S T Jayasuriya run out	3
†R S Kaluwitharana lbw b Dale	54
M S Atapattu run out	82
*A Ranatunga not out	45
U D U Chandana c Dale b Warne	8
H P Tillekeratne c sub b Warne	3
D P M Jayawardene b McGrath	1
R S Mahanama b Warne	4
W P U J C Vaas not out	2
Extras (lb 2, w 3, nb 4)	9
Total (7 wkts, 49.3 overs)	211

G P Wickremasinghe and M Muralitharan did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-4, 2-120, 3-183, 4-178, 5-188, 6-190, 7-198

BOWLING: McGrath 10-2-33-1; Dale 10-2-30-1; Julian 10-0-41-0; Lee 6-0-39-0; Warne 10-0-45-3; Blewett 3.3-0-21-0.

Umpires: S J Davis and P D Parker.

Rain puts A tour on hold

From Thrasy Petropoulos in Harare

ENGLAND A were forced to abandon their scheduled four-day match against Mashonaland and hope instead that the rain eases sufficiently to play two limited-overs matches against the province today and tomorrow.

For the second day running, the players arrived at the Old Hararians ground in the morning only to find that the bowlers' run-ups and parts of the square were too wet to risk playing on. Protective covers had leaked on the first day and efforts to find an alternative venue failed once it had become clear that most other grounds in Harare were suffering similar problems.

Hopes are high that the one-day matches will go ahead, but there are questions being asked about the suitability of touring here during the rainy season, although few could have predicted the 44in that have fallen since mid-November. The yearly average is about 35in.

Phil Neale, the tour manager, said: "There is a reasonable chance that it will rain here at this time of year. I was not involved with why it was decided to come at this time. There were fingers crossed that it wasn't going to rain, but everybody is saying that this is exceptional."

However, there was a time when the very idea of an A tour this winter was doubtful. Initially, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) had looked at visiting South Africa with a shorter, final leg in Zimbabwe. With South Africa unable to host the requested tour, Zimbabwe were quick to seize the opportunity.

Short of cricket, the players have not been slow in seeking alternative entertainment. Nevertheless, they will be hoping that the golf, go-karting, Laser Wars and such like will be substituted by cricket today.

India omit opener Sidhu

By Richard Hobson

INDIA will begin the first home series against Pakistan for 12 years with a new opening partnership after dropping Navjot Sidhu and Ajay Jadeja from the side that lost to New Zealand last month. If the omission of Jadeja, the former vice-captain, from the 14-man squad announced yesterday was expected, that of Sidhu was a considerable surprise.

In 51 Test matches stretching back to 1983, Sidhu has scored 3,202 runs at an average of 42.13. A barren series against New Zealand, in which he totalled just 48 runs from four innings, was his first failure for some time. He still averages almost 50 over the past two years, but, at 35, he may find that his career at the highest level is over as the selectors bring in younger players.

The likelihood is that Nayan Mongia, the wicketkeeper, will move up the order to open with Sadagopan Ramesh, a new cap, in the first of the two-match Test series, which will begin amid high security in Madras next Thursday. Laxmi Ratan Shukla, an all-rounder, could be another to play his first game.

Pakistan arrived in Delhi yesterday as members of Shiv Sena, a militant Hindu organisation, called off plans to disrupt the tou after a meeting with offficials of the India Government. It says much for the importance of the weeks ahead that the Pakistan team is being managed by Shahrayar Khan, a former foreign secretary.

□ Vic Brownett resigned as chairman of Derbyshire yesterday after failing to find a solution to the continuing dispute between Dominic Cork, the captain, who is intent on leaving the County Ground, and Harold Rhodes, a committee member.

INDIA SQUAD: Mohammad Azharuddin (captain), Saurav Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, V V S Laxman, Nayan Mongia, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Venkatesh Prasad, Harbhajan Singh, Sunil Joshi, Sadagopan Ramesh, Hrishikesh Kanitkar, Laxmi Ratan Shukla.

HOCKEY

Southgate face trial of strength

By Sydney Friskin

SOUTHGATE will entertain Hounslow, their traditional rivals, when the National League restarts on Sunday after the winter break. The clubs meet again at the same venue in the sixth round of the English Hockey Association (EHA) Men's Cup on February 28.

Hounslow, third from the bottom in the premier division, face a daunting task, but their opponents, holding third position, will have to draw heavily on reserve strength with Giles, Livesey, Sully and Simons all unfit, although Simons is expected to be on the bench. At centre half, Max Diamond, the Australia international, will be a source of inspiration to the three front-runners, Eiko Rott, Duncan Woods and Danny Kerry.

Canterbury, the league leaders, and Beeston meet for the first time this season at the Polo Farm, where Sean Kerly, the player-manager, and David Mathews will again be out of action. "Beeston are a tenacious team and we are wary of them," Kerly said. He made particular reference to Craig Keegan, the Beeston midfield player, who has scored 14 goals in ten matches.

Cannock, in second place, are at full strength, with the recovery of Kalbir Takher from injury, against Guildford, who field Mark Hoskin, from Reading, and Richard Arscott, from Hampstead, their new signings. Victory in a triangular tournament at Havant has boosted their confidence.

Reading play their postponed EHA Cup fifth-round tie tomorrow at home against Loughborough Students, for which Simon Mason, their goalkeeper, is unavailable, but he will join them for the trip to Bournville on Sunday for a league match. Brooklands, at the bottom of the table, need a win away to East Grinstead to have any chance of survival.

Slough set sights on triple goal

By Cathy Harris

SLOUGH have spent several weeks tinkering with line-ups and tactics, but the serious stuff begins tomorrow, when the English indoor club champions meet Paris in their opening game of the inaugural Perth world cities championship at the Bell's Sports Centre.

It is the start of a busy month for Slough, who have made no secret of their desire to win a medal in Perth, retain their domestic title at Crystal Palace next week and end the Germans' domination of the European club championship in Glasgow in February.

Andy Halliday, the new Slough coach this season, has enjoyed his association with such a talented group of players. He will also be keeping his fingers crossed that Sue Knight, the first-choice goalkeeper, does not suffer any injuries after Lynnette Smith, the reserve goalkeeper, was forced to pull out of the competition for financial reasons.

Facing the prospect of six games in two days, Halliday believes that the event will give his squad an excellent indication of what progress they have made. "It will be a measure of where we are, as well as being a good dress rehearsal for next week," he said. "I'm very happy with the defensive side of our game, but we need to make better use of our possession and try to be more incisive."

England Under-21, representing Manchester in the tournament, are using it to prepare for the European Nations Cup in Prague next week, but with students making up the majority of the side, Pete Nicholson, the coach, has found it difficult to juggle practices with exam schedules. He said: "At least we'll be able to benefit from some good competition and give all the players pitch time without worrying too much about results."

TEAMS: Slough (representing London), England Under-21 (Manchester), Glasgow Western (Glasgow, Scotland (Perth), France Under-21 (Paris), Canada (Toronto), Australia (Sydney).

★★★ Worth buying

TENNIS: BRITON'S FAMED SERVICE POWER HOLDS NO TERRORS FOR YOUNG AMERICAN

Qualifier floors Rusedski

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT
TENNIS CORRESPONDENT
IN MELBOURNE

IT IS back to the drawing board for Greg Rusedski. Great Britain's adopted son closed 1998 with the best sequence on the ATP Tour, but has opened 1999 with one of the worst. His defeat yesterday by Paul Goldstein, a qualifier from the United States, leaves him with one victory from his four matches this year.

Goldstein, who is ranked No 187 in the world, was playing only his tenth match on the main tour here at the Australian Open, yet his dipping returns, allied to his biting passes, made Rusedski appear to be the novice. The Briton, who was seeded No 8, looked bemused as Goldstein chipped away at his confidence. The way Goldstein that rolled his wrists made his backhand passes unreadable — so much so, in fact, that Rusedski could be said to have been beaten comprehensively by the time that he graciously congratulated Goldstein, winner by 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2 in one minute short of three hours.

The American, who left Stanford University, in California, in July, showed a spirit that is normally abundant in the Briton as he ran down balls that Rusedski had counted as winners. Indeed, when Goldstein lunged, for the third time in one rally, to retrieve a Rusedski overhead at 3-1 and 30-30 in the fourth set, the Briton barely blinked when pushing an easy volley beyond the baseline. Rusedski by now was a spent force, his service a shadow of the one that has intimidated so many of Goldstein's ranking.

Rusedski has never played well in the Australian Open. He dislikes the combination of heat, swirling breezes and the shortage of preparation time after the December recess. For all that, he would have sent Goldstein packing if he had been anywhere near his best.

"I am obviously very disappointed, more so than after losing in Stockholm [and so just failing to make the eight-man world championships field in November]," Rusedski said. "I have no excuses. Hats off to him. He was probably the best returner of serve that I have played."

In addition to his faltering service, Rusedski's groundstrokes lacked reliability — particularly his backhand, which deteriorated as the match progressed. Yet what made this such an abject defeat was that it evolved from an excellent start. He fashioned two points for a 4-0 lead and wasted both with wildly flailing forehands. In addition, he required eight set points before finally nailing the second set in a tie-break that had been fraught with tension. Rusedski's constant fidgeting betrayed the state of his mind. He lost the third set to some exquisite Goldstein passes and there was to be no redemption.

Rusedski now heads to Dubai next month before playing indoor events in Europe. He has some significant ranking points to defend in the next two months and a return to form is essential if he is to maintain his place in the world's top ten. Sven Groeneveld, his coach, has the task of picking him up.

"Greg is down but not out," Groeneveld said. "I have got a great belief in his ability; now, the challenge is to get him back in a winning mood."

One who appears to exude those qualities is Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the No 10 seed, who overcame a tough hurdle in the form of Jason Stoltenberg, of Australia, in four tight sets. Kafelnikov, of Russia, admits that he lacked motivation in 1998. Now, the former French Open champion, who plays Jim Courier in the third round, looks a prime candidate for the title.

Among bookmakers, Kafelnikov is quoted below Andre Agassi, for whom it was business as usual, the American overwhelming Slava Dosedal, of the Czech Republic, in three sets. Lleyton Hewitt, the Australian teenage prospect, met his match in Tommy Haas, of Germany, who prevailed in four sets.

The Petr Korda saga rumbles on. The defending men's champion was barracked by a handful of spectators as he routed Julian Alonso, of Spain, 6-3, 6-1, 6-1. One was heard to call "cheat" at the player who escaped a ban after testing positive for steroids at Wimbledon. "Some of the fans were using insulting words," Korda said. "I just don't want to talk about it."

The latest instalment in the bid by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) to impose a one-year ban on Korda reaches the High Court in London next week, when Korda's lawyers will challenge the ITF's right to appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.

Rusedski, the sole men's seed to perish yesterday, was followed out of the tournament by Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, of Spain, the women's No 4 seed. Sánchez Vicario lost heavily to Barbara Schett, of Austria, for the second time in a week.

She was unhappy that the match was switched, at short notice, away from Centre Court, but Schett, after her win in Sydney, was entitled to be optimistic.

STEVE HOLLAND



Rusedski is unable to disguise his disappointment after losing a service game against the unheralded Goldstein

RESULTS FROM MELBOURNE

MEN

SINGLES: Second round: P Korda (Cz) bt J Alonso (Sp) 6-3, 6-1, 6-1; V Spadea (US) bt F Squillari (Arg) 6-3, 6-4, 6-4; T Martin (US) bt H Dreekmann (Ger) 4-6, 6-2, 7-6, 6-2; N Kiefer (Ger) bt C Mamiit (US) 6-2, 7-5, 7-6; W Black (Zim) bt A Medvedev (Ukr) 6-4, 6-4 3-6, 4-6, 6-2; A Pavel (Rom) bt S Huet (Fr) 6-4, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3; D Nestor (Can) bt S Schalken (Holl) 7-5, 6-1, 6-0; G Pozzi (It) bt L Roux (Fr) 2-6, 6-3, 6-1, 3-0, ret; J Novak (Cz) bt A Clement (Fr) 3-6, 6-7, 6-0, 6-3, 6-3; T Haas (Ger) bt L Hewitt (Aus) 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; Y Kafelnikov (Russ) bt J Stoltenberg (Aus) 7-5, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6; P Goldstein (US) bt G Rusedski (GB) 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2; J Courier (US) bt Y El Aynaoui (Mor) 7-6, 6-4, 5-7, 6-2; M Damm (Cz) bt S Sargsian (Arm) 4-6, 6-3, 6-7, 6-4, 6-3; F Santoro (Fr) bt G Raoux (Fr) 6-4, 1-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3; A Agassi (US) bt S Dosedel (Cz) 7-6, 6-2, 6-0

DOUBLES: First round: D Petrovic and G Silcock (Aus) bt M Bertolini (It) and D Bowen (US) 6-7, 6-2, 6-3; J Palmer and J Tarango (US) bt J Holmes and T Larkham (Aus) 6-3, 6-3; N Kulti and M Tillstrom (Swe) bt J Gimelstob and B MacPhie (US) 6-4, 7-5; B Black (Zim) and W Ferreira (SA) bt M Keil (US) and J Knippschild (Ger) 7-5, 6-1; P Galbraith (US) and P Haarhuis (Holl) bt P Kilderry (Aus) and K Kinnear (US) 6-1, 6-3; J Bjorkman (Swe) and P Rafter (Aus) bt N Godwin and M Ondruska (SA) 6-2, 6-2; B Haygarth (SA) and T J Middleton (US) bt D del Rio and M Puerta (Arg) 6-4, 6-7, 15-13; G Kuerten (Br) and N Lapentti (Ec) bt P Norval and K Ullyett (SA) 6-4, 2-6, 8-6; M Bhupathi and L Paes (India) bt E Kempes and P Wessels (Holl) 6-4, 6-2; W Black (Zim) and S Stolle (Aus) bt T Mitchell and A Painter (Aus) 7-6, 7-6; T Woodbridge and M Woodforde (Aus) bt D Pescariu (Rom) and N Zimonjic (Yug) 3-6, 6-3, 9-7

WOMEN

SINGLES: Second round: S Appelmans (Bel) bt A Serra-Zanetti (It) 6-3, 6-1; B Schett (Austria) bt A Sánchez Vicario (Sp) 6-2, 6-2; E Likhovtseva (Russ) bt V Ruano Pascual (Sp) 6-2, 6-3; M Hingis (Switz) bt E Dementieva (Russ) 6-3, 6-2; M Seles (US) bt A Dechaume-Balleret (Fr) 6-1, 6-4; S Williams (US) bt M Serna (Sp) 6-1, 6-3; M J Fernandez (US) bt A Frazier (US) 4-6, 7-5, 6-3; R Grande (It) bt Li Fang (China) 6-2, 6-4; S Graf (Ger) bt B Schwartz (Austria) 4-6, 6-1, 6-2; J Dokic (Aus) bt K Brandi (US) 6-4, 7-5; A Kournikova (Russ) bt M Saeki (Japan) 1-6, 6-4, 10-8; M Pierce (Fr) bt A Kremer (Lux) 6-2, 6-1; J Lee (Taiwan) bt S Reeves (US) 7-5, 6-1; A Glass (Ger) bt T Panova (Russ) 7-5, 6-7, 7-5; A Coetzer (SA) bt J Halard-Decugis (Fr) 4-6, 7-5, 6-4; S Testud (Fr) bt E Callens (Bel) 6-3, 6-1.

DOUBLES: First round: S Noorlander (Holl) and Wang Shi-Ting (Taiwan) bt A Ortuno and M Ramon (Sp) 7-5, 6-3; K Kunce (Aus) and K Po (US) bt M Drake (Can) and T Musgrave (Aus) 7-5, 6-3; F Labat (Arg) and D van Roost (Bel) bt L Osterloh and M Washington (US) 7-5, 3-6, 6-2; S Farina (It) and K Habsudova (Slovakia) bt A Canepa and T Garbin (It) 6-1, 6-1; Y Basuki (Indo) and A Mauresmo (Fr) bt R McQuillan (Aus) and N Miyagi (Japan) 6-2, 7-6; C Cristea and R Dragomir (Rom) bt A Huber (Ger) and L Wild (US) 2-6, 6-1, 6-3; K Hrdlickova (Cz) and T Krizan (Slovenia) bt R Grande (It) and E Wagner (Ger) 6-4, 6-3; S and V Williams (US) bt C Barclay and K-A Guse (Aus) 6-4, 6-1; I Spirlea (Rom) and C Vis (Holl) bt V Csurgo (Hun) and Kim Eun-Ha (S Kor) 6-1, 6-2; A Dechaume-Balleret (Fr) and L Golarsa (It) bt E de Lone (US) and N Pratt (Aus) 6-3, 6-3; L Davenport (US) and N Zvereva (Bela) bt A Frazier and K Schlukebir (US) 6-2, 6-1; A Coetzer and J Steck (SA) bt C Rubin (US) and S Testud (Fr) 4-6, 6-2, 6-3; E Callens (Bel) and J Halard-Decugis (Fr) bt S Reeves (US) and T Tanasugarn (Thai) 6-2, 6-7, 6-3; K Boogert (Holl) and A-G Sidot (Fr) bt M Tu (US) and M Wengartner (Ger) 6-2, 6-7, 6-2; A Carlsson (Swe) and J Dokic (Aus) bt C Martinez (Sp) and P Tarabini (Arg) 1-6, 6-3, 6-0; L Raymond (US) and R Stubbs (Aus) bt S Cacic (US) and S Jeyaseelan (Can) 7-5, 6-1; J Novotna (Cz) and M Seles (US) bt L Horn (SA) and K Kschwendt (Aus) 6-3, 6-2.

Finn suffers maximum heartbreak

Phil Yates sees a snooker player feeling browned-off, blue, pink with embarrassment and in a black mood

ROBIN HULL will not require an in-flight movie to pass the time when he returns to his native Finland after the completion of the Embassy world championship qualifying competition at Blackpool. He will be replaying mentally the most expensive mistake of his career.

Hull, a former world junior champion from Helsinki, gained an unwanted distinction yesterday when he became the first player to miss the final black in a professional event with a maximum break available. The financial implications alone were sufficient to leave Hull in the midst of a deep depression, even though he whitewashed Tom Finstad, of Canada, 10-0 to move within three more victories of becoming his country's pioneering representative at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield, home of the final stages.

When Hull, who had compiled five century breaks in earlier rounds, showed deft positional skills to pot 15 reds with 15 blacks and the colours from yellow to pink, he looked set to emulate Cliff Thorburn, Jimmy White, Stephen Hendry and Ronnie O'Sullivan by constructing a run of 147 in the world championship.

Previously, Joe Johnson had slipped up closest to a maximum, when, during a losing effort against White in the semi-finals of the 1987 United Kingdom championship, he failed to pot a fairly straightforward pink off its spot.

The first sign that Hull was under pressure came when he requested Jan Verhaas, the referee, to clean the cue-ball. This task completed, Hull, who admitted later that his heart was pounding, attempted a half-ball cut on the black that was worth £7,000 and immeasurable kudos.

Having struck the white, Hull watched as the black shaved the jaws of the top pocket that it was intended to find and remained, agonisingly, on the table. In fact, it came so near to dropping that some members of the crowd began to applaud.

Hull stood to collect the £2,000 highest pre-televised break prize, which is held by Barry Pinches, of Norwich, with 143. In addition, he would have received the £5,000 award that goes to anyone who records a 147 during the qualifying phase of a world-ranking tournament. The total package was considerably more than he earned throughout last season.

"I composed myself like a total idiot," he said. "Instead of calming myself down on the pink and trying to think properly, I didn't make my mind up as to how I should play it. That's why I left myself with a tougher black than I should have. After the black had travelled about a foot, I knew it was heading for the jaw and I felt terrible."

At least Hull had the small consolation of knowing that he would have felt rather worse had the error been committed at the Crucible itself. Anyone who misses the black on 140 at Sheffield in April will deprive themselves of £167,000.

Mark Williams, the Benson and Hedges Masters champion, won two of the closing three frames and Matthew Stevens also aided a spirited fightback as Wales recovered from a 3-5 deficit to defeat Northern Ireland 6-5 in the Nations Cup at Newcastle yesterday. Williams laid a snooker on the yellow in the deciding frame against Joe Swail and later cleared to the pink to give Wales their second victory in three matches. Success against England tomorrow will earn a place in the final on Sunday.



Hull on his way to a victory that was tinged with grief

Answers from page 43

STROOL
(c) A stream (of water or other liquid). The Gaelic word. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1922: "Sending me that long strool of a song out of the Huguenots to sing in French."

WEDDELL
(a) A seal. The eponym of James Weddell (1787-1834), Scottish navigator, used attributively or in the possessive. Weddell's seal, to designate a large brown Antarctic seal. Leptonychotes weddellii, first recorded by him and named after him in 1826.

ZUG
(a) The name (formerly proprietary) for a variety of waterproofed leather used especially for the uppers of climbing boots.

SHAGGERY
(b) A breeding colony of shags. The New Zealand word.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE
1. Rxf7! forces a quick mate, eg, 1. ... Kxf7; 2. Qe6+ Kf8; 3. Rf1+.

TELEVISION CHOICE

A fly-on-the-runway series

Airline
ITV, 8.00pm

Call them docusoaps if you must but the new documentaries, just like the old, depend on ordinary people being simultaneously themselves and whatever they imagine the camera requires. So this episode begins with old ladies getting confused at the airport, one of them emerging as "A Character" as she grows to like the attention. The whole series justifies its existence for her strand alone. One man, who has missed the last call to his flight, blames the airline and, increasingly high on his own performance, soon has built his anger into a veritable aria. Meanwhile, behind the absurd uniform the easyJet staff are obliged to wear, individuals improvise as best they can, easier with the camera than the passing passengers. There's some electrifying gossip and a hair-down girls' night out when, poignantly, the bride-to-be who is battling cancer gives her all to *I Will Survive*.

Garden Stories
BBC2, 8.30pm

For a Friday gardening programme, this series is really finely conceived, shot and edited. The third edition, with mole-catching as a running theme, tackles those various foes that bring out the savage in hitherto benign weeders and hoers: cats and slugs, theft and the elements. One rum chap, thwarted by winds, has created an ankle-high Versailles in his patch. Another chap keeps his lawn immaculate with CCTV and water sprays triggered by invaders. As he propounds his methodology, his two daughters sit behind, patently bored to tears. These participants sportingly allow the producers, Belinda Cherrington and Gregor Cameron, to mock them in a gentle way that makes all of us — creators, participants and viewers — complicit.

Frasier: Dial M for Martin
Channel 4, 10.00pm

This week a potentially far-reaching scenario is essayed: Should Dad (Martin) move in with Niles? And will Daphne go too? This is the kind of shake to the equilibrium that Galton and Simpson used to propose every so often to keep *Steptoe and Son* up to speed. And of course it works because it serves to underline the familiar ingredients that keep you watching a long-running show. So we begin with Frasier and Martin having the kind of rolling row all relatives and home-sharers indulge in on a regular basis, wherein far harsher words are let fly than the pretext justifies. As ever the women are fundamentally peripheral, shoe-horned in to feed the men their lines.

Jim Broadbent, the writer and star of *Big Day*, part of *The Talent* (BBC2, 11.45pm)

The Talent
BBC2, 11.45pm

Three new shorts this week, none getting fully to grips with this elusive form of film-making. Brian Ross's *Spitting Distance* is a rambling and ultimately deeply depressing tale of a Scottish artist and apparent ne'er-do-well, his girlfriend who hankers to become a publican in Reading and his Grandad, a sly, emphysema-ridden old party in a wheelchair. The piece greatly benefits from having Tom Bell in this last role. *Jumpers!*, directed by Konrad Jay and written by Colin Bateman, is a shaggy dog story of ill luck wherein four men and a large teddy bear come to be gathered on the ledge of a building. The film's structure veers to the chaotic and the humour is forced. The cast includes the ubiquitous James Nesbitt. *Big Day*, directed by Tom Cairns, relates an intriguing but flimsy anecdote about an Englishman who learns from being tumbled in a Latin country. Jim Broadbent wrote himself the lead.

W. Stephen Gilbert

RADIO CHOICE

Little and Large
Radio 4, 11.00am

No, not the comedians, although the victims of the essentially tragic situation recounted here have found something to be cheerful about through their adversity. Kerry Lawrence and Tina Little spent a weekend together recently and this programme is the record of that meeting, the culmination of a long relationship as pen friends during which each has been able to help the other's attempts to regain good health. Kerry and Tina are mirror images: Kerry an anorexic whose weight fell to five stones, Tina weighing nearly four times that amount through over-eating. They encountered each other through the Eating Disorders Club and soon discovered that they have similar emotional problems.

A Very British Story
Radio 2, 7.00pm

Michael Freedland's series about 60 years of the British film industry has been informative and entertaining and continues tonight with a programme about the contribution of the Rank Organisation, whose muscle-bound figure striking a huge gong is one of the abiding images from my early days in the front stalls. Rank made most of the British classics from the 1940s and 1950s at Elstree and Pinewood, where everyone from Bogarde in the *Doctor* films to Olivier in *Henry V* helped give Britain a presence in the world of film, albeit a somewhat restricted, nationalistic one. Among the interviewees tonight are Dora Bryan, talking about her movie break and Gregory Peck, who filmed at Elstree.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00pm** Kevin Greening **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Pete Tong's Essential Selection **9.00** Judge Jules **11.00** Westwood: Radio 1 Rap Show **2.00am** Fabio and Grooverider **4.00** Emma B

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am *Sarah Kennedy* **7.30** *Wake Up to Wogan* **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00pm** Jimmy Young **2.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** Des Lynam **7.00** *A Very British Story. See Choice (3/4)* **7.30** Friday Night Is Music Night **9.15** Frankenstein (2/5) **9.30** Listen to the Band **10.00** David Jacobs **10.30** Sheridan Morley **12.00am** Lynn Parsons **4.00** Lata Sharma

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00pm** *The Midday News with Allan Robb* **1.00** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra **7.30** *Alan Green's Sportsnight. Alan Green and studio guests debate the week's sporting action and look ahead to the weekend* **10.00** *Late Night Live with Brian Hayes* **1.00am** Up All Night with Richard Dallyn

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Mark Forrest **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **7.00** Wheels of Steel **11.00** Janey Lee Grace **2.00am** Steve Power

TALK RADIO

6.00am *David Banks and Nick Ferrari* **9.00** Scott Chisholm **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **3.00** OK! to Talk **5.00** The Sports Zone **8.00** Jackie Mason: Live from New York **10.00** Dave Barrett's Phone-In with the Midnight Psychic **1.00am** Mike Dickin

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** Westway **8.20** Off the Shelf: Silas Marner **8.35** Science in Action **9.00** World News **9.05** The Art of Translating **9.20** John Peel **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** On Your Behalf **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Focus on Faith **12.00pm** World News **12.05** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** Science in Action **2.30** Best on Record **3.00** World News **3.05** Football Extra **3.15** Performance **3.30** The Vintage Chart Show **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** Multitrack: Alternative **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Focus on Faith **7.00** World News **7.05** Science in Action **7.30** On Your Behalf **7.45** Off the Shelf: Silas Marner **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** Best on Record **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** Multitrack: Alternative **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00am** The World Today **12.30** Science in Action **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Meridian Books **2.00** The World Today **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today **4.30** Weekend

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Easier Breakfast. Music to get the day off to a fine start, presented by Michael Mappin **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour. Plus, favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300 **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones plays favourite music **2.00** Concerto. Monn (Cello Concerto in G minor) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics, plus sport updates and travel news **6.30** Newsnight. Top stories and interviews with guests from the arts world **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert: Wagner (Siegfried Idyll); Holst (The Planets); Walton (In Honour of the City of London); Respighi (Aretusa) **11.00** Mann at Night. Music through the wee small hours **2.00am** Concerto. Monn (Cello Concerto in G minor) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny. Includes Mozart (Violin Concerto No 2 in D, K211); Schubert (Impromptu in A flat, D899 No 4)
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Includes Litolff (Scherzo from Op 102); Elgar (Falstaff); Beethoven (Piano Sonata in G, Op 79); Vivaldi (Violin Concerto in G minor, Op 8 No 2, Summer; Four Seasons); Telemann (Magnificat in C)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Marilyn Horne
11.00 Sound Stories: Fairy Tales Peggy Reynolds introduces music inspired by the story of Scheherazade
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Purcell
1.00 *The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert* *David Titterington, professor of organ studies at the Royal Academy of Music, teams up with the* Swedish trombonist Christian Lindberg for a duet recital at St Marylebone Church, London
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Jurjen Hempel, Jean-Yves Ossonce, Alun Francis and Osmo Vänskä, Marco Rizzi, violin, Rosemary Eliot, flute
4.00 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping introduces a selection of music from Spain (r)
4.45 Music Machine Verity Sharp talks to the pianist Julian Joseph (r)
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty talks to the conductor Ivan Fischer as he brings the Budapest Festival Orchestra to London
7.45 Performance on 3 Live from Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh, introduced by Geoffrey Baskerville. BBC Scottish Symphony under Yoav Talmi. Haydn (Symphony No 45 in F sharp minor, Farewell) **8.15** News from North Britain: Mystic Lotus, by Ellen Galford. Read by Maureen Beattie **8.35** Concert, part two. Bruckner (Symphony No 4 in E flat, Romantic)
9.45 Postscript: *The Monet Market* *With excerpts from Monet's letters read by Paul Scofield (5/5)*
10.00 Hear and Now Verity Sharp presents highlights from the Park Lane Group's annual series of concerts
11.30 Jazz Century with Russell Davies (r)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Rimsky-Korsakov (r)
1.00am Through the Night with Donald Macleod. Includes **1.00** Gluck (Le Cinesi) **2.05** Tchaikovsky (Symphony No 6 in B minor, Pathetique) **3.10** Kuhlau (Sonata in A minor, Op 85) **3.40** Prokofiev (Peter and the Wolf) **4.15** Crusell (Sinfonia concertante in B flat) **5.00** Mozart (Symphony No 23) **5.25** Wagner (Gotterdammerung, Brunnhilde's Immolation Scene)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News **5.35 Shipping Forecast**
5.40 Inshore Forecast ***5.45 Prayer for the Day***
5.47 Farming Today Charlotte Smith presents
6.00 Today introduced by John Humphrys and Sue MacGregor. Including *Thought for the Day* with Indarjit Singh
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Round-up of developments
9.00 Desert Island Discs The wildlife artist David Shepherd chooses eight records to take to the mythical island (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Iris John Bayley recalls the later years of his wife, the novelist Iris Murdoch
9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 Little and Large Two members of the Eating Disorders Club spend a weekend together. See Choice (r)
11.30 The Oldest Member: The Purification of Rodney Spelvin Starring Maurice Denham (4/6)
12.00pm (FM) News
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.04 You and Yours Liz Barclay and John Waite present consumer issues
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Puzzle Panel *New series. Chris Maslanka* presents riddles and brain-teasers
2.00 The Archers Another chance to hear yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Spirite Gautier's ghostly romance set in 19th-century Paris. Starring Katy Cavanagh and Richard Heap (r)
3.00 Logged On Quentin Cooper and guests assess educational software
3.30 The Vale A fox's future hangs in the balance at the Evesham wildlife charity rescue centre (4/8) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle The history of Britain, narrated by Anna Massey (r)
4.00 Open Book Irish novelist and playwright Joseph O'Connor explores the art of writing dialogue (r)
4.30 The Message Alex Brodie and his guests discuss current media trends
5.00 PM with Clare English and Eddie Mair
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The Ghost of Number Ten The Prime Minister's New Year's Honours List causes a stir, prompting Lottie and Emmeline to take matters into their own hands. Arise, Sir Boggy! (3/6)
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Mark Lawson presents the nightly arts programme
7.45 Lady Susan Broadcast earlier within *Woman's Hour* (r)
8.00 Any Questions? Jackie Ballard MP, the Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett and the author and *Times* columnist Will Self join Jonathan Dimbleby in Matlock, Derbyshire
8.45 Letter from America Alistair Cooke with another slice of life Stateside
9.00 The Friday Play: 625Y Wally K Daly's play about a research scientist who discovers the gene which determines a person's natural lifespan. With Amanda Root and Geoffrey Whitehead
10.00 The World Tonight Robin Lustig presents
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana Final part of Emile Zola's novel, read by Juliet Stevenson
11.00 Late Night on 4: Late Tackle Sporting conversation, with Eleanor Oldroyd
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
11.30 (FM) Road to Recovery The former Welsh rugby captain Gwyn Jones' battle against a crippling neck injury
12.00am News **12.30 The Late Book: Last Resort** by Alison Lurie. Read by Kate Harper (10/10)
12.48 Shipping Forecast ***1.00 As World Service***

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Snippets and snips of carefully cut reality

At her Bristol practice, the Norwegian vet Trude Mostue meets Thomas, a canary with an infected toe. She decides to amputate and fetches her surgical nail-clippers. Zot. Over in Taunton, Tracey Bristow, a snack-stall proprietor, has rejoined the local health club for the fourth time. Will she be able to stick to the regime this time?

Whoosh. On a farm near Carmarthen, there's a cow with a lacerated udder. Keith Leonard must attempt his first blood transfusion. We'll stay with that story for a good 30 seconds before — zap — it's over to Sean in Glasgow, who is just mounting the scales at the slimming club. He's lost two pounds, despite his secret chocolate biscuit binges!

On *Fat Files* (BBC1), they separate the tiny item fragments with a fuzzy screen and electronic interference sound-effect. Don't bother to flip channels, this tells us, we're doing it for you. They don't employ this device on *Vets in Practice* (BBC1), but the morsels are equally bite-size.

Granada's recently leaked pitch for a major new TV current affairs slot proposes to chop the programmes into short, attention-grabbing segments. Apparently this will capture the "zeitgeist". "Zeitgeist", by the way, is German for "having a minute attention span". If Granada hopes to poach viewers from programmes such as *Fat Files* or *Vets in Practice*, its Burning Topical Issue McDippers will have to be very short indeed.

Both programmes are harmless. They offer mildly interesting episodes from the lives of ordinary people. Breaking the stories into teensy pieces and jumbling them up lends a spurious sense of urgency, suggesting that events are occurring simultaneously when they obviously aren't. In the can of mixed veg that is modern factual television, you hardly notice the boring old turnip-like stories because they are diced up with the bright, dramatic carroty ones and the sweet little peas.

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

Vets in Practice was subtitled *Bonnie and Clyde*. Fortunately the animals in this instalment were not riddled with Tommy-gun bullets, but some of the injuries were gory enough to make a hard-bitten film fan queasy. I began to feel like the squeamish zookeeper in *The Fast Show*, who can't touch a gate because it has got camel spit on it. If cuddly Rolf Harris's *Animal Hospital* makes you go "Aaah!", this programme elicits more of an "Uurgh!"

The vets themselves are very decorative, but that merely heightens the contrast with their patients. Cute little Clyde, for instance, had been hit by a bus. His tiny feline jaw was a mangled mess, his eyes bashed to bits, and his leg smashed. Pretty blonde Fiona performed what looked like a superb piece of reconstructive surgery, stitching, wiring and pinning his leg *with a sort of double-ended* lollipop (that's a thousand quid to you, and I'm robbing meself).

Pretty blonde Trude only had to deal with Bonnie's unsavoury canine skin condition, until Thomas arrived. Then she clipped off the canary's toe, on camera. I am still shuddering.

The tone of the programme is gently upbeat. Upbeat is flavour of the month. But nasty old reality keeps intruding. Over on the farm, pretty, dark-haired Keith had to improvise, collecting cow blood in an insecticide spray pump. Blood transfusions for cows are tricky operations, which carry serious risks. "See it. Do it. Teach it," Keith reflected. He was at stage two. The cow died. Maybe he should leave stage three for now.

But the sad death of the cow was as nothing compared with what *Fat Files* held in store. The programme has been following the progress of five unusually overweight people as they struggle to diet. It is not an advice programme, and there is no aim to analyse as in *Horizon*'s harrowing *Living on Air* (BBC2), on the effects of eating disorders.

The tone aims to be positive and cheerful, which is not unreasonable, except that gross obesity can be a serious emotional as well as physical problem. Snackbar Tracey and Glaswegian Sean are doing just fine. Tracey comes from a family of caterers, but thinks you make spaghetti bolognese by stirring tomato ketchup into mince. She also feeds her daughter Casey "half a packet of biscuits, Milky Ways and crisps" for breakfast, an offence to make you think about reintroducing the death penalty.

But Terri Vickery, who is losing weight rapidly, feels that her whole life is changing. The diet is clearly affecting her sense of her own identity in a *major* way and she looks, frankly, a little unstable. I have no idea what the rest of the series has in store for her, but it looks as if everything could go horribly wrong.

And then there is Mervyn, strangely absent from the pre-publicity. This genial electrician had surgery to reduce the size of his stomach. He died six days after the operation. His wife agreed that the material could be used, perhaps as a sort of tribute. At the end of this glib, bitty programme, it wasn't the sort of memorial I would want.

Dispatches (Channel 4) went to Kosovo. It had permission to accompany an independent team led by a Finnish forensic expert, Professor Helena Ranta, investigating two small massacres. One was allegedly carried out by Serbs on Albanians, the other vice versa.

The programme was superseded by the discovery of the atrocity at Racak, and the commentary had to be amended at the last minute. *It is extremely timely.* Professor Ranta's team has been asked to return to investigate Racak, and the programme illustrates the shameless cunning and sheer persistence of the official obstruction it will face.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (52990)
7.00 Breakfast News (T) (12349)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (9309613)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (5845483)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (7711377)
11.00 Real Rooms (7721754)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7628613)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1924209)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (76358)
12.30 Battersea Dogs' Home (93272)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (62826)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (8633261)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (65192629)
2.05 Ironside The chief investigates an alleged suicide, but soon discovers there's more to the case than meets the eye (r) (7478803)
2.55 Going for a Song (8370358)
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2701209)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (3379378) **3.45** Spider (9896209) **3.50** Smart on the Road (8132071) **4.05** Rugrats (9295071) **4.30** L & K Friday (1438174) **4.55** Newsround Extra (1838919) **5.10** Blue Peter (6314629)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (802174)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (551)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (803)
7.00 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook Carol Smillie and Andy Kane attempt to create a meal against the clock using mystery ingredients (T) (2700)
7.30 Top of the Pops Performances by 911, Another Level, All Seeing I, 3 Colours Red, Juliet Roberts, Bryan Adams and Mel C and Blockster (T) (777)
8.00 Vets in Practice Sam pulls out all the stops to save a horse with a potentially fatal condition, while Emma is called out to assist an epileptic dog (T) (1848)



The Welsh sprinter Colin Jackson joins the sporting quiz (8.30pm)

8.30 A Question of Sport With guests Tim Henman, Laura Davies, Rio Ferdinand and Colin Jackson (T) (3483)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8919)
9.30 Parkinson Guests include Caroline Aherne, Prince Naseem Hamed and Gary Barlow (T) (595532)
10.25 Poltergeist (1982) A family's home is invaded by spooks who gain access through the TV set. Supernatural chiller, starring JoBeth Williams, Craig T Nelson and Heather O'Rourke. Directed by Tobe Hooper (T) (878613)
12.10am The Stand-Up Show Comedy series, hosted by Ardal O'Hanlon (5625965)
12.40 The Big End (T) (5661255)
1.10 The Unnamable Returns (1992) An occult expert teams up with a professor to track down the supernatural killer of four students. Horror sequel, starring David Warner. Directed by John Paul Ouellette (T) (919946)
2.50 Weather (4492897)
2.55 BBC News 24 (82083236)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Harry Jeremy (2868731) **7.05** Teletubbies (2747648) **7.30** Secret Squirrel and Co (3619280) **7.55** Short Change (2033822) **8.18** Rewind (8412280) **8.20** Taz-Mania (9560706) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (8942483) **8.50** Johnson and Friends (8948687) **9.00** Storytime (7876938) **9.10** See You, See Me (6284803) **9.30** Numbertime (8057735) **9.45** Come Outside (8045990) **10.00** Teletubbies (69629) **10.30** Megamaths (3903358) **10.50** Look and Read (3916822) **11.10** Landmarks (1262822) **11.30** English File (3714) **12.00pm** Scene (94700) **12.30** Working Lunch (93254) **1.00** Johnson and Friends (7348358)
1.10 The Antiques Show (T) (82372822)
1.40 The Arts and Crafts Show (65108822)
2.10 Indoor Bowls and Racing from Ascot Bowls: early quarter-final action from Great Yarmouth. Racing: Coverage of the 2.40, 3.10 and 3.40 (49519280)
5.00 Tennis: Australian Open The key action from the fifth day (9613)
6.00 The Simpsons (r) (T) (579975)
6.20 The Simpsons (r) (T) (936813)
6.45 Robot Wars (T) (805990)
7.15 Electric Circus The latest entertainment news (T) (134193)
7.30 Country House The family are horrified to learn that an illegal rave has been held on part of the estate (T) (629)
8.00 Gardening from Scratch Helen Yemm demonstrates how to renovate old borders, while Jojo Norris helps Jeni and Rob plant their fruit garden (r) (T) (2990)
8.30 [CHOICE] **Garden Stories** Advice on dealing with the most common problems gardeners face (T) (1025)
9.00 Gimme Gimme Gimme Tom receives a visit from a suicidal home help and Linda finds romance with a sexy motorcycle courier (T) (9261)
9.30 Bang, Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer The Stotts interview model Caprice and a crazed hillbilly kidnaps a quartet of celebrities (4/6) (T) (29938)
10.00 The Young Ones Mike gets hold of an atom bomb (r) (T) (75629)
10.30 Newsnight With Kirsty Wark (T) (431700)



A profile of the Eighties Manchester band the Smiths (11.15pm)

11.15 Young Guns Go for It! The Smiths. *Last in series* (T) (185648)
11.45 [CHOICE] **The Talent** Short film showcase introduced by Mark Lawson (T) (650648)
12.35am Indoor Bowls: World Championship Highlights (7474033)
1.20 Six Days, Six Nights (1994) Premiere. Two sisters' lives become fatally entwined despite their best efforts to keep apart. Thriller, starring Beatrice Dalle. Directed by Diane Kurys (283033)
2.55 Weather (4482410)
3.00 BBC Learning Zone: *GCSE Revision*: Geography 1 (70830) **5.00** Close

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (80782)
6.00 GMTV (6504938)
9.25 Trisha (T) (3378209)
10.30 This Morning (T) (24945919)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (9162087)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News; Weather (T) (23700)
1.00 WEST: Shortland Street Minnie issues *an ultimatum* (93174)
1.00 WALES: Wish You Were Here? Mallorca and St Lucia (r) (T) (93174)
1.30 Snooker: Nations Cup Live coverage of the match between England and the Republic of Ireland (T) (55264551)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (2799464)
3.20 HTV News (T) (2796377)
3.25 CITV: *Mopatop's Shop* (2606700) **3.35** Timbuctoo (9885193) **3.40** Animal Stories (9873358) **3.50** Adam's Family Tree (8258025) **4.20** Gladiators: Train 2 Win (9292984) **4.50** Top Ten of Everything (9975648)
5.10 A Country Practice (5557826)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News; Weather (T) (433193)
6.00 Home and Away Diana makes big plans *for Olivia* (T) (935464)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight; Weather (T) (532700)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (270272)
6.30 WEST: The West Tonight (T) (241)
7.00 Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right New series (T) (2416)
7.30 Coronation Street Jack and Vera leave *the Rovers* (T) (483)
8.00 [CHOICE] **Airline** Cabin crew trainees learn what it's like to be *confronted by terrorists* (T) (6716)
8.30 Neighbours from Hell (T) (8551)
9.00 Tilly Trotter Part three of the Catherine Cookson drama, starring Carli Norris, Simon Shepherd and Madelaine Newton (3/4) (T) (7551)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (95483)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (730613)



Denise Van Outen joins Ian Wright for a late-night chat (10.40pm)

10.40 Friday Night's All Wright With guests Denise Van Outen and the *Fast Show* duo Paul Whitehouse and Charlie Higson (646025)
11.35 Snooker: Nations Cup Highlights of *today's two matches* (213716)
12.40am WEST: Pirate TV The duo visit Bristol (9/13) (7461588)
12.40 WALES: We Can Work It Out Consumer magazine (7461588)
1.05 The World Is Full of Married Men (1979) Jackie Collins sex romp about an advertising executive's extra-marital escapades. Anthony Franciosa, Gareth Hunt and Georgina Hale star. Directed by *Robert Young* (923149)
2.40 The Haunted Fishtank (r) (9533588)
3.15 Baywatch (r) (T) (4383762)
4.05 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (4072174)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (40830)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (6788735)
1.00-1.30 Wish You Were Here? (93174)
3.20-3.25 Central News (2796377)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5557826)
6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (532700)
10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (730613)
12.40am FILM: Victim of Beauty (581946)
2.15 Box Office America (9602149)
2.40 SeaQuest 2032 (6578149)
3.30 The Haunted Fishtank (24439)
4.00 Central Jobfinder '99 (1954641)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (4942101)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (9162087)
12.27-12.30 Illuminations (6796754)
1.00-1.30 Westcountry Update (93174)
3.20-3.25 Westcountry News; Weather (2796377)
5.08 Birthday People (8220984)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (5557826)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (11919)
10.30-10.40 Westcountry News; Weather (730613)

As HTV West *except*: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News**; Weather (9162087) *5.10-5.40* **Home and Away** (T) (5557826) **6.00-7.00 Meridian Tonight** (T) (11919) **10.30-10.40 Meridian News**; Weather (T) (730613) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (40830)

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (6694342) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (6788735) *1.00-1.30* **Save Your Bacon** (6/6) (r) (93174) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street** (5557826) **6.23 Anglia Weather** (820731) **6.25-7.00 Anglia News** (T) (532700) **10.29 Anglia Air Watch** (957025) **10.30-10.40 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (730613)

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (45669984) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (47702938) **9.00 Ysgolion:** Off Limits (98028735) **9.25 Schools at Work** (72230261) *9.30* **Eureka** (89330938) **9.45 Stop, Look, Listen** (89328193) **10.00 The Complete Cosmos** (71555261) **10.10 TVM** (35585483) **10.25 Iaith ar Daith** (35564990) **10.45 Enter the Maths Zone** (39898803) **11.00 The Technology Programme** (18842648) **11.15 Pa Newydd?** (18752071) *11.30* **Powerhouse** (T) (24651193) **12.00pm Bewitched** (T) (16383648) **12.30 Sesame Street** (T) (38378822) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (47705025) **1.30 WEB** (T) (24120938) **1.35 FILM: The Wrong Man** (T) (92894990) **3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (T) (56065629) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (56077464) **4.30 Dishes** (T) (56073648) **5.00 Planed Plant** (T) (22832498) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56984700) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (69836990) **6.10 Heno** (T) (95645087) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (46232254) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (56074377) *8.00* **Cefn Gwlad** (T) (30937862) *8.30* **Y Clwb Rygbi** (T) (41282759) **9.00 Pawb a'i Farn** (T) (10625862) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (54825990) **10.35 Frasier** (T) (67757193) **11.05 Eurotrash** (T) (26161795) **11.35 TFI Friday** (T) (49561613) *12.40am* **Streetmate** (T) (66456101) **1.10 4 Later**; The Divine David Presents (26987472) *1.45* **Exploitica: Burlesque Beauties** (4/12) (T) (23107675) **2.15 Exploitease** (T) (30988033) **2.25 FILM: Teasarama** (T) (78332439) **3.45 FILM: Snowbound** (87237675) **5.10 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.55am **Sesame Street** (r) (4594396)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (98629)
9.00 Schools: Off Limits (6274261) **9.25** Schools at Work (7006803) **9.30** Eureka (8042803) **9.45** Stop, Look, Listen (8047358) *10.00 The Complete Cosmos* (4585087) **10.10** TVM (9250648) **10.25** Ulster Unearthed (9262483) **10.45** Enter the Maths Zone (5634025) **11.00** The Technology Programme (6101071) **11.15** Stage One (6297822)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (5822)
12.00pm Sesame Street (T) (92396)
12.30 Bewitched (T) (21342)
1.00 Pet Rescue (r) (T) (91716)
1.30 Earthscape (66421551)
1.40 Danger Within (1958) British officers detained in a PoW camp discover that their escape plans are threatened by an informer. Richard Todd and Bernard Lee star. *Don Chaffey directs* (T) (55259629)
3.30 Hampton Court Palace (T) (377)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (984)
4.30 **Countdown** (T) (1358984)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (4469342)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (648)
6.00 TFI Friday Chris Evans is joined by Anthea Turner and Ron Atkinson plus music from Divine Comedy (43731)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (953713)
7.55 Music of the Millennium Lionel Richie *selects his favourite singer* (T) (901087)
8.00 The Lost Gardens of Heligan Tim Smit discovers how Victorian gardeners were able to grow gigantic pineapples and other fruits (3/6) (r) (T) (4358)
8.30 Brookside (T) (6193)
9.00 Friends Monica decides to spend a cosy Thanksgiving with the gang, but fate pulls the rug from under her (r) (T) (1629)
9.30 Streetmate Davina McCall visits Bristol and Cork (T) (14006)



John Mahoney stars as Martin, Frasier's father (10pm)

10.00 [CHOICE] *Frasier Martin moves in* with Niles as Frasier struggles to cope with unemployment (T) (93025)
10.30 Eurotrash (r) (T) (892377)
11.05 King of the Hill Peggy hears shocking news (T) (296209)
11.35 TFI Friday Shown earlier (r) (211358)
12.40am 4 Later Introduction; The Divine David Presents (3987830)
1.15 Exploitica: Burlesque Beauties Femmes fatales (4/12) (T) (14472)
1.45 Exploitease Striptease artists (4991584)
1.55 Teasarama (TVM 1955) Strippers, *comedians and dancers strut their stuff in* a tale of backstage rivalry Directed by Irving Klaw (T) (7898965)
3.15 Snowbound (1948) An actor-turned-soldier goes undercover in the Alps to trap a gang trying to recover gold bullion stolen by Nazis. Directed by David *MacDonald* (T) (5978110)
4.40 Dweebs (r) (48617965)
5.05 Pearl dilemma (r) (1478507)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport *Headlines* (7600193)
7.00 WideWorld Maggie Philbin explores the world of science (r) (T) (9705396)
7.30 Milkshake! (4857759)
7.35 **Wimzie's House** (r) (9436209)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1796700)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (1795071)
9.00 Mixing It (r) (T) (1882551)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6228445)
10.20 Sunset Beach (T) (2826193)
11.10 Leeza (r) (2713919)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (1879087)
12.30 Family Affairs Dave attempts to explain himself to Cat (r) (T) (9645716)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Brooke is *furious with Ridge* (T) (9704667)
1.30 The Roseanne Show (9644087)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6065087)
2.30 Good Afternoon (4257551)
3.30 Just Me and You (TVM 1978) A mismatched pair of fellow travellers fall for each other during a trip to California. Comedy, starring Charles Grodin. Directed by John Erman (9268342)
5.20 Sunset Beach Shown earlier (r) (T); 5 *News Update* (6717071)
6.00 100 Per Cent Quiz (5926396)
6.30 Family Affairs Dave and Annie make a pact (T) (5917648)
7.00 5 News; Weather (T) (6069803)
7.30 Wild Flight A study of the hummingbird, using slow-motion photography to capture the beautiful bird in flight (T); 5 *News Update* (5906532)
8.00 Was It Good for You? Ailsa Greenhalgh invites two gay friends, and a couple celebrating their silver wedding anniversary to comment on their holiday *in Venice* (3/14) (6078551)
8.30 Holiday Park The police have bad news for irate holidaymakers who have collared a suspected peeping Tom, and *EastEnder* Carol Harrison, who plays *Tiffany's mum, visits the park for respite* from the trials and tribulations of Albert Square (3/5) (T) (6064358)
9.00 Mary Higgins-Clark's Moonlight Becomes You (TVM 1996) An *inquisitive woman investigates the brutal* murder of her former stepmother, refusing to believe the police's theory that the shocking crime was a random slaying. Mystery thriller, starring Donna *Mills and David Beecroft*. Directed by Bill Corcoran (T); 5 News Update (52677984)
10.40 Comedy Store Special The best in stand-up comedy (3131990)
11.15 Devotion (1995) A troubled woman is *taken on an erotic journey through her* past lives by an Asian mystic. Adult drama, with Jane Daniels. Directed by Rob Spera (5894551)
12.50am Battle Cry (1955) Second World War drama following the fortunes of a group of Marines. Van Heflin, Aldo Ray, Mona Freeman and Nancy Olson star. *Directed* by Raoul Walsh (39162491)
3.25 Slapstick (1981) A compilation of stunts and mayhem from the golden age of silent comedy. Featuring Charlie Chaplin, *Laurel and Hardy*, Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton (57117878)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (3669168)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (3306043)

PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE
7.00am Count Duckula (41735) 7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (88628) 8.30 Hollywood Squares (14532) 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (24829) 10.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (59754) 11.00 Guilty! (59990) 12.00pm Jenny Jones (82687) 1.00 Mad About You (40006) 1.30 Jeopardy (42803) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (80236) 3.00 Jenny Jones (77025) 4.00 Guilty! (58532) 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (3071) 6.00 Married — With Children (3713) 6.30 Friends (4483) 7.00 The Simpsons (4700) 7.30 The Simpsons (3957) 8.00 Beat the Crusher (57434) 9.00 UFOs Above and Beyond (87990) 10.00 Cops (26377) 10.30 Cops (35025) 11.00 Friends (57261) 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (29396) 12.30am Highlander: The Series (14566) 1.30 Long Play (5802168)

SKY BOX OFFICE
Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26) Trial and Error (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) The Wings of the Dove (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) The Borrowers (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) One Night Stand (1997)

FILMFOUR
6.00pm A River Runs Through It (1992) (43489735) 8.05 The Madness of King George (1994) (28431629) 9.55 The Making of Betty Blue (4890648) 10.20 Betty Blue (1986) (34281938) 1.20am Beautiful Thing (1996) (3831410) 2.50 Jamon Jamon (1992) (6283205) 4.20 Life is Sweet (1990) (6416149) 6.00 Close

SKY PREMIER
6.00am Matilda (1996) (98933) 8.00 Old Yeller (1957) (26938) 10.00 Shaughnessy (1996) (45990) 12.00pm After Jimmy (1996) (30731) 2.00 Old Yeller (1957) (56241) 4.00 Shaughnessy (1996) (9445) 6.00 Matilda (1996) (99735) 8.00 White Man's Burden (1995) (94280) 10.00 Primal Fear (1996) (74009532) 12.10am Entertaining Angels (1997) (373694) 2.05 Riders of the Purple Sage (1941) (240014) 3.45 Breaking In (1989) (61653236)

SKY MOVIEMAX
5.35am UFOria (1980) (88381613) 7.10 The Undercover Kid (1995) (11248193) 9.00 Shootdown (1988) (80272) 11.00 Susie Q (1996) (82716) 1.00pm The Undercover Kid (1995) (19648) 3.00 Shootdown (1988) (27984) 5.00 Susie Q (1996) (31209) 7.00 P:Review (2396) 7.30 UK Top 10 (5735) 8.00 Action Heroes: Wesley Snipes (8716) 8.30 Movie Magic: Mouthing Off (9321) 9.00 Beavis and Butt-Head Do America (1996) (75613) 10.30 The Naked Gun 2 1/2: The Smell of Fear (1991) (28416) 12.00am Vegas Vacation (1997) (330014) 1.35 It's My Party (1996) (450878) 3.25 The Protector (1997) (850782)

SKY CINEMA
4.00pm Spellbound (1945) (8618700) 6.00 Irene (1940) (7096813) 8.00 The Black Windmill (1974) (7171358) 10.00 North Dallas Forty (1979) (6918648) 12.00am To Live and Die in LA (1985) (8364217) 1.55 Dark Past (1948) (91453052) 3.15 The Directors: Sidney Lumet (8489781) 4.15 Scarlet Claw (1944) (1098781)

TNT
9.00pm WCW Nitro (28624418) 11.35 WCW Thunder (89867087) 1.15am Brotherly Love (1970) (13444781) 3.15 The Venetian Affair (1967) (76043507) 5.00 Close

SKY SPORTS 1
6.30am Futures in Sport 7.00 Sports Centre 7.15 World Wrestling Federation Superstars 8.15 Sports Centre 8.30 Racing News 9.00 Aerobics Oz Style 9.30 You're On Sky Sports! 10.00 What a Weekend 10.30 Trans World Sport 11.30 Live European PGA Golf: South African Open 2.30pm Football League Review 3.00 The Rugby Club 4.00 Trans World Sport 5.00 Futbol Mundial 5.30 What a Weekend 6.00 Sports Centre 7.00 European Golf: South African Open 10.00 Sports Centre 11.00 Hold the Back Page 12.00am Sports Centre 1.00 World Wrestling Federation: Raw 3.00 Hold the Back Page 4.00 Sports Centre 5.00 Motorcycling

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00am Aerobics Oz Style 7.30 Sports Centre 7.45 Racing News 8.15 What a Weekend 8.45 Sports Centre 9.00 Fishing: Tight Lines 10.00 Ice Hockey 12.30pm The Rugby Club 1.30 Fishing: Tight Lines 2.30 Survival of the Fittest 3.00 Ice Hockey 5.30 World Sport Special 6.00 Moto-Plus 6.30 H2O 7.00 Live Friday Night Football 10.00 US Golf: Bob Hope Classic 11.30 International Cricket 2.00am Sports Centre 3.00 H2O 3.30 Live International Cricket

SKY SPORTS 3
11.30am Futures in Sport 12.00pm Survival of the Fittest 12.30 Live International Cricket 8.00 Motorcycling 9.00 Moto-Plus 9.30 H2O 10.00 World Wrestling Federation: Raw 12.00am Close

EUROSPORT
7.30am Car on Ice 8.00 Ski-Jumping 8.30 Luge 9.00 Live Alpine Skiing 10.00 Live Women's Alpine Skiing 11.30 Live Alpine Skiing 12.30pm Live Biathlon 2.00 Tennis 6.30 Live Football 8.30 Alpine Skiing 9.00 Boxing 10.00 Tennis 11.00 Playlife 12.00am Youth Only Zone 12.30 Close

UK GOLD
7.00am Crossroads 7.30 Neighbours 7.55 EastEnders 8.30 The Bill 9.00 The Bill 9.30 The House of Eliott 10.30 Rhoda 11.00 Dallas 11.55 Neighbours 12.25pm EastEnders 1.00 Juliet Bravo 2.00 Dallas 2.55 The Bill 3.25 The Bill 3.55 EastEnders 4.30 Rhoda 5.00 All Creatures Great and Small 6.00 Dynasty 7.00 2point4 Children 7.40 It Ain't Half Hot, Mum 8.20 Yes, Minister 9.00 The Thin Blue Line 9.40 Knowing Me, Knowing You with Alan Partridge 10.20 Ruby Wax Meets Goldie Hawn 11.00 The Bill 11.30 The Bill 12.00am Doctor Who 2.30 Best of the Old Grey Whistle Test 3.00 Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS
6.00am Within These Walls 7.00 On the Buses 7.30 Doctor in the House 8.00 That's My Boy 8.30 Up the Garden Path 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 Emmerdale Farm 10.00 thirtysomething 11.00 Hawaii Five-O 12.00pm Classic Coronation Street 12.30 Emmerdale Farm 1.00 Nearest and Dearest 1.30 Agony 2.00 thirtysomething 3.00 The Love Boat 4.00 The Saint 5.00 Hawaii Five-O 6.00 Emmerdale Farm 6.30 Classic Coronation Street 7.00 Mission: Impossible 8.00 The Love Boat 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 The Comedians 10.00 Jokers Wild 10.30 Hogan's Heroes 11.00 Granada Men and Motors



Whoopi Goldberg stars as a modern American who finds herself at King Arthur's court in *Knight in Camelot* (Disney Channel 8pm)

DISNEY CHANNEL
6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House 6.25 Classic Toons 6.35 Gummi Bears 7.00 Classic Toons 7.10 Aladdin 7.35 101 Dalmatians 8.00 Goof Troop 8.25 Classic Toons 8.45 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 9.00 Spot 9.05 Animal Shelf 9.15 Pocket Dragons 9.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 9.55 The Toothbrush Family 10.00 Bite Size 10.10 Tots TV 10.30 The Big Garage 10.45 PB and J Otter 11.00 Sesame Street 12.00pm Spot 12.05 Animal Shelf 12.15 Pocket Dragons 12.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 12.55 The Toothbrush Family 1.00 Bite Size 1.15 Tots TV 1.30 The Big Garage 1.45 PB and J Otter 2.00 Quack Pack 2.30 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 3.00 The Little Mermaid 3.30 Art Attack 4.00 101 Dalmatians 4.30 Hercules: The TV Show 5.00 Recess 5.15 Pepper Ann 5.30 Smart Guy 6.00 Teen Angel 6.30 Boy Meets World 7.00 Honey, I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show 7.50 Classic Toons 8.00 FILM: Knight in Camelot (1998) 9.30 Home Improvement 10.00 Dinosaurs 10.30 The Wonder Years 11.00 Touched by an Angel 12.00am Close

NICKELODEON
6.00am Muppet Babies 6.30 Rocko's Modern Life 7.00 CatDog 7.30 Rugrats 8.00 The Wild Thornberrys 8.30 Arthur 9.00 Children's BBC 10.00 Wimzie's House 10.30 Babar 11.00 The Magic School Bus 11.30 PB Bear/Budgie the Little Helicopter/Animal Antics/Family Ness 12.00pm Rugrats 12.30 Blue's Clues 1.00 Bananas in Pyjamas 1.30 Little Bear Stories 2.00 Clangers/King Rollo/Wombles/Bod 2.30 Children's BBC 3.00 Children's BBC 3.30 Pippi Longstocking 4.00 Hey Arnold! 4.30 Rugrats 5.00 Sister Sister 5.30 Kenan and Kel 6.00 Sabrina the Teenage Witch 6.30 Driven Crazy 7.00 Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK
6.00am Power Rangers Turbo 6.30 Power Rangers Turbo 7.00 Mortal Kombat 7.25 Oggy and the Cockroaches 7.30 Donkey Kong Country 8.00 Goosebumps 8.25 Sam and Max 8.35 Spiderman 9.00 X-Men 9.25 Fantastic Four 9.50 The Incredible Hulk 10.15 Casper 10.30 Oggy and the Cockroaches 10.55 The Mouse and the Monster 11.05 EekStravaganza 11.30 Life with Louie 11.55 Home to Rent 12.05pm Sam and Max 12.30 Donkey Kong Country 1.00 Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book 1.25 Ace Ventura 1.50 Spiderman 2.15 X-Men 2.40 Fantastic Four 3.05 The Incredible Hulk 3.30 Roy and Lisa's Big Ride 3.35 Mortal Kombat 4.00 Spiderman 4.25 Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book 4.50 Home to Rent 5.00 Goosebumps 5.25 Eerie Indiana: The Other Dimension 5.50 Oggy and the Cockroaches 5.55 Donkey Kong Country 6.25 Sam and Max 6.50 EekStravaganza 7.00 Close

TROUBLE
7.00am USA High 7.30 City Guys 8.00 Saved by the Bell: The New Class 8.30 Hang Time 9.00 Tempestt 10.00 Hollyoaks 10.30 Echo Point 11.00 Sweet Valley High 11.30 California Dreams 12.00pm The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air 12.30 In the House 1.00 Tempestt 2.00 Hollyoaks 2.30 Echo Point 3.00 Ready Or Not 3.30 City Guys 4.00 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air 4.30 In the House 5.00 Saved by the Bell: The New Class 5.30 Sweet Valley High 6.00 Hang Time 6.30 Movies, Games and Videos 7.00 USA High 7.30 Ready or Not

BRAVO
8.00pm The A-Team 9.00 LAPD 9.30 Cops 10.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 10.30 Erotic Series 11.00 FILM: Revenge of the Calendar Girls (1995) 1.00am Sex Bytes 1.30 Scary Sex 2.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 2.30 Cops 3.00 FILM: The Panic in Needle Park (1971) 5.00 LAPD 5.30 Bushido 6.00 Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY
7.00pm Clueless 7.30 Grace Under Fire 8.00 Roseanne 8.30 News Radio 9.00 Cybill 9.30 Vic Reeves New Years Night Out 10.00 Jack Dee at the London Palladium 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show 12.00am Late Night with David Letterman 1.00 Taxi 1.30 The Critic 2.00 Dr Katz 2.30 Soap 3.00 Wings 3.30 Nightstand 4.00 Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL
SATELLITE: 6pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY
7.30am Bloomberg Information Television 8.00 Sightings 9.00 Battlestar Galactica 10.00 Quantum Leap 11.00 Dark Shadows 11.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 12.00pm The Twilight Zone 12.30 The Twilight Zone 1.00 Tales of the Unexpected 1.30 Tales of the Unexpected 2.00 Amazing Stories 2.30 Mysteries, Magic and Miracles 3.00 Battlestar Galactica 4.00 The Incredible Hulk 5.00 Sightings 6.00 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 6.30 New Alfred Hitchcock 7.00 Quantum Leap 8.00 Amazing Stories 8.30 Highlander: The Raven 9.30 The Hunger 10.00 FILM: Red Sonja (1985) 10.45 Sci-Focus 11.45 FILM: Ninja Scroll (1993) 1.45am Sci-Focus 2.00 The Guyver 2.30 100 Years of Horror 3.00 The Twilight Zone 3.30 Dark Shadows 4.00 Close

HOME & LEISURE
6.00am Today's Gourmet 6.30 Graham Kerr 7.00 Craftwise 7.30 The Painted House 8.00 Wedding Story 8.30 A Baby Story 9.00 Simply Painting 9.30 Garden Rescue 10.00 Bloom 10.30 Cookabout with Greg and Max 11.00 Two's Country Get Stuck In 11.30 Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 12.00pm Australia's Strangest Home Improvements 12.30 Doing it Up 1.00 Our House 1.30 Hometime 2.00 Wood Wizard 2.30 Home Again with Bob Vila 3.00 This Old House with Steve and Norm 3.30 Go Fishing

DISCOVERY
4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 4.30 Walker's World 5.00 Flightline 5.30 History's Turning Points 6.00 Animal Doctor 6.30 Eye on the Reef 7.30 Beyond 2000 8.00 Outback Adventures 8.30 Uncharted Africa 9.00 Roller Coaster 10.00 Top Banana 11.00 Weapons of War 12.00am Bodyguards 1.00 History's Turning Points 1.30 Flightline 2.00 Close

ANIMAL PLANET
12.00pm Klondike and Snow 1.00 Nature Watch with Julian Pettifer 1.30 Australia Wild 2.00 Wild Rescues 2.30 Human/Nature 3.30 Harry's Practice 4.00 Jack Hanna's Animal Adventures 4.30 Animal Doctor 5.00 Pet Rescue 5.30 Australia Wild 6.00 The New Adventures of Black Beauty 6.30 Lassie 7.00 Animal Planet Classics: Lilliput in Antarctica 8.00 Animal Doctor 8.30 Animal X 9.00 Ocean Wilds 9.30 Emergency Vets 10.00 Animal Hospital 10.30 Vet School 11.30 Emergency Vets 12.00am Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
7.00pm Clan of the Crocodile 7.30 Antarctic Challenge 8.00 The Shark Files: Danger Beach 9.00 Komodo Dragons 10.00 African Diary: Wildlife Warriors 11.00 Among the Wild Chimpanzees 12.00am The Survival Game

HISTORY
4.00pm The World at War: Home Fires 5.00 Observations: Stonehenge to the Space Telescope 6.00 Lost Civilizations: Tibet 7.00 Story of the Gun: Next Generation

CARLTON FOOD
9.00am Food Network Daily 9.30 Food for Thought 10.00 First Taste 10.30 Worrall Thompson Cooks 11.00 What's Cooking? 11.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 12.00pm Food Network Daily 12.30 Newman Meets 1.00 Food for Thought 1.30 An Umbrian Kitchen 2.00 Can't Stand the Heat 2.30 Food Network Daily 3.00 For Better, for Worse 3.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 4.00 New Chefs on the Block 4.30 Tessa Bramley's Country Kitchen 5.00 Close

LIVING
6.00am Tiny and Crew 6.20 Philbert the Frog 6.30 Johnson and Friends 6.45 Tiny Tales 6.50 Polka Dot Shorts 7.00 Practical Parenting 7.05 Professor Bubble 7.30 Caillou 7.35 Bug Alert 7.55 Practical Parenting 8.00 Barney and Friends 8.30 Tiny Tales 8.35 Tiny and Crew 8.50 Practical Parenting 9.00 Diet Show 9.30 The Roseanne Show 10.00 The Jerry Springer Show 10.50 Maury Povich 11.40 Living Issues 12.10pm Animal Rescue 12.40 Rescue 911 1.10 Special Babies 1.40 Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction 2.10 LA Law 3.10 Living Room 4.00 Michael Cole 4.50 Rolonda 5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook 6.15 The Jerry Springer Show 7.05 Rescue 911 7.35 Animal Rescue 8.00 Murder Call 9.00 FILM: Dying to Love You (1993) 11.30 Sex Life Down Under 12.00am Close

ZEE TV
5.30am Music Time 6.00 Sorry Meri Lorry 6.30 Mast Mast Show 7.00 Faith 7.30 News 8.00 Ghoomta Aaina 8.30 Sailaab 9.00 Adhikar 10.00 Anhoni 11.00 Zaika Ka Safar 11.30 Parampara 12.00pm FILM: Geetanjali 3.00 Zee Bangla 3.30 Its My Choice 4.00 Campus 4.30 Zee Zone 5.30 Amanat 6.00 Artist of the Fortnight 6.30 Zee and You. Showcase 7.00 Chashme Baddoor 7.30 Entertainment Express 8.00 News 8.30 Aashirwad 9.30 FILM: Padosan 12.00am News 12.30 Ru-Ba-Ru 1.00 X-Zone 2.00 FILM: Hindi Movie: Ayilaah

★★★ Worth buying

ATHLETICS 43
Running out of Africa towards a place in the England team

SPORT

SNOOKER 46
Taking it to the maximum — and then throwing it all away



Hoddle happy with rising rate of interest

By Matt Dickinson

A NEW year and a new sponsor for the England team, but will 1999 offer a bright new start for Glenn Hoddle? The Nationwide Building Society will certainly hope so after staking £15 million on the fate of the England coach and the international team over the next four years.

Much as they talked earnestly about supporting the grass roots of the game yesterday, the building society's marketing men know that it is to the fluctuating fortunes of Hoddle and his team that they have tied their money and, more signficantly, their reputation.

Still, they must be brave gambling men at heart, because they have ignored the recent scandals at the Football Association, which cost Graham Kelly and Keith Wiseman their jobs, England's recent European championship qualifying results and Hoddle's uneasy relationship with the media to stake their money on long-term success.

Those in the commercial department at Lancaster Gate can pat themselves on the back for securing almost four times the amount that Green Flag had paid for the same sponsorship privileges, but the new deal also poses one question. If this England team is valued at £15 million over four years, just how much more would a truly successful one be worth?

Perhaps Hoddle will find out in years to come, but first he must face five months that could be defining ones in his reign as England coach. The jury is still out on his credentials as he enters the last 18 months of his contract.

With just one victory from England's first three qualifying matches — and that against Luxembourg — games at home to Poland in March and Sweden in June, followed by Bulgaria away will be critical.

Hoddle announced yesterday that a match had also been arranged in Hungary for April 28, but first will be France at Wembley on February 10, when a good result will be essential if Hoddle is to build on the positive vibes that were produced by a victory over the Czech Republic in England's last match.

The game against France is almost sold out and Hoddle believes that the rush for tickets is evidence of continued support for his methods from the country, rather than just a desire to see the world champions. "I am not sure there has been any dip in public



Hoddle: positive

confidence," he said yesterday, "and I think a sell-out shows that.

"We are delighted to be playing France and so is the country. That will be a hell of a game with a real edge to it, because the result will be important as well as the performance. A good result then will give us a major lift, confidence-wise. They don't come any bigger than the world champions, so it couldn't be better."

It is qualfication for the European championship that remains the target, though, and England's campaign has got off to a highly unconvincing start. "Two wins at Wembley in the next two qualifiers would put a different complexion on the group," the England coach said yesterday. "It is not really a fresh start for us. That is the wrong attitude. We are bang in the middle of the season and the qualifiers and we are focused on what is ahead."

The Nationwide must be as confident as Hoddle, because its sponsorship deal is not dependent on England's success in qualifying for the European championship. In paying so much money, however, it is only reasonable that it might expect the England team's image to improve. It will hope the talk at Bisham Abbey press conferences is of football rather than World Cup diaries and faith healers.

"The days of taking the money and running are long gone," Phil Carling, the FA's commercial director, said. "The image of the team and players is very, very important. The sponsors are sharing a bit of the cloak with the national team and we think they are buying into passion, excellence, professionalism and honesty."

The players will not be any richer for the deal. The FA's contribution to the players' pool was settled, after some wrangling, before the World Cup and they will not be receiving any additional cash for commercial appearances.

The FA was not the only organisation to benefit yesterday. The Football League's sponsorship deal with the Nationwide, which was due to expire in the summer, has been extended for another two years with a significant increase, to more than £4 million per year.

"Attendances have been rising every year that we have been involved with the Nationwide," Richard Scudamore, the League chief executive, said, "and they are up 4 per cent already this time. We will be building on that with them."

The Football Conference will also be sponsored by the Nationwide for the next two years. "We are supporting the game of football as a whole," Brian Davis, the chief executive, said. But it is the fortunes of the England team that matter most.

☐ West Ham United are expected to spend the first of the riches from the sale of John Hartson next week when Marc-Vivien Foe arrives at Upton Park. The Cameroon midfield player is due in London on Monday for a medical and is expected to conclude a £4 million move. The 23-year-old was close to signing for Manchester United from Lens last season, but the deal was called off when he broke his leg. United have since made three significant signings and there was no indication yesterday that they would try to resurrect the transfer.

West heads north, page 44

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1621

ACROSS
1 Is almost late (4,2,4)
7 Towards centre (7)
8 Coherent-light beam (5)
10 Shared transport arrangement (3,4)
11 One acting for another (5)
12 (At one's) bidding (6)
15 Of the teeth (6)
17 Metal mixture (5)
18 Set of targets, victims (3,4)
21 Russian whip (5)
22 Redwood tree (7)
23 Impudence (10)

DOWN
1 Shrink in fear (5)
2 Trunk (of body) (5)
3 Contemptuous remark (6)
4 Greenery (7)
5 In earliest development (7)
6 Totally dark (5-5)
9 Old, shaky vehicle (10)
13 Delay starting; keep at bay (4,3)
14 (US) unethical eg lawyer (7)
16 Selected (6)
19 Woman's small hat (5)
20 Tusk material (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1620
ACROSS: 1 Villa 4 Curious 8 Level best 9 Bye 10 Tube 11 Teetotal 13 Prefer 14 Wolsey 17 Reprisal 19 Moss 22 Née 23 Conducive 24 Respect 25 Tight
DOWN: 1 Valet 2 Lovable 3 Axle 4 Clever 5 Rotation 6 Orbit 7 Shelley 12 Mediocre 13 Partner 15 Snoring 16 Magnet 18 Press 20 Scent 21 Curt

RUSSIAN STARLET SUFFERS FROM DOUBLE VISION ON PAINFUL PATH TO THIRD ROUND



Faulty powers: Kournikova tries to get it right this time

Double trouble: Kournikova tries to keep her cool, above, as the frustrations of her repeated double faults begin to take hold, below, before finally claiming victory in the final set

DAVID GRAY

Kournikova rues loss of normal service

From Julian Muscat in Melbourne

SHE may look a million dollars, but you wouldn't give tuppence for her service...

The obsession with Anna Kournikova may have reached new heights at the Australian Open, the men of Melbourne melting at the feet of the Russian ice maiden, but one aspect of her play has plunged to near-farce.

For someone so clearly aware of the importance of shape in the spicy world of modern women's tennis, she is showing an alarming disdain for the small rectangle on the court into which her service should be dropping.

In her second-round match yesterday, the 18-year-old served up 31 double faults against Miho Saeki, of Japan, but somehow scrambled to victory 1-6, 6-4, 10-8. Added to the 26 that she produced in the first round, it took her aggregate for the tournament to 57. Two matches in Sydney last week yielded 34 doubles and her tally for her past seven matches now stands at 147.

"It has been happening for a while, so I am kind of used to it," she said. "I'm really frustrated with it, just like everybody who is watching. In practice, I feel fine, I serve normal and there's no sign of double faults — it's just when I come to the line, when I play, there's something happening."

Kournikova should beware. A gaggle of teeny talent is clamouring for her crown, as witnessed yesterday by the arrival of another Soviet starlet, Elena Dimentieva. Seventeen, leggy and blonde, with elongated fingernails painted metallic silver, she ultimately succumbed to that gnarled veteran, Martina Hingis.

The Swiss miss visibly frowned upon the gallery's allegiance to the unknown Dimentieva, but she will be in for more of the same — and then some — when she faces Jelena Dokic, the 15-year-old local heroine, tomorrow.

Hingis has grown up to crave her fame. She describes herself as one of the game's Spice Girls, often treating herself to extravagant diamonds as reward for her performance. In an effort to further brighten her profile, she has enlisted an established crowd-puller as her doubles partner here. However, in chosing Kournikova, Hingis may already be dwelling on the past.

Rusedski beaten, page 46

London lures grand slam of leading marathon men

By David Powell, Athletics Correspondent

IN 1972, at the peak of his fame as British sport's best-loved rascal, Dave Bedford sent a message home from the Munich Olympic Games. "Stop whatever you are doing at 5.15pm," he said, via a back page lead in *The Sun*, "gather the family around the TV set and watch me win the 10,000 metres gold medal for Britain." He finished sixth.

Bedford is more guarded now in the things he says, otherwise he might have been tempted yesterday to shout the following: "Stop whatever you are doing on Sunday morning, April 18, gather the family around the TV set and watch the greatest marathon ever run."

Instead, in revealing the quality of the field that he has signed for the Flora London Marathon, Bedford went no further than to suggest that it was merely "the strongest we have ever assembled". Understatement? Definitely. Given the names included, and their achievements, there is the potential for London to witness the fastest and most thrilling slog over 26 miles and 385 yards in history.

Bedford, showing the power of his chequebook, has signed the grand slam of honours holders: the world champion, Abel Anton, from Spain; the Olympic champion, Josiah Thugwane, from South Africa; the European champion, Stefano Baldini, from Italy; the world record holder, Ronaldo da Costa, from Brazil.

Thugwane: Olympic gold

Additionally, providing depth that even the world championship in Seville this year is unlikely to match, Bedford has secured Khalid Khannouchi, from Morocco, Josephat Kiprono, from Kenya, Alberto Juzdado, from Spain, Antonio Pinto, from Portugal, and Lee Bong-Ju, from South Korea. Each is a man of substance in the world of elite marathon running.

"To have eight runners capable of running under 2hr 8min is formidable," Bedford said, again with understatement. I count nine, perhaps more. We can forget the idea of the first British men's winner since Eamonn Martin in 1993, despite the inclusion of Richard Nerurkar and Jon Brown, the domestic top two.

Historically, what has London got to beat to claim the best marathon ever? On time alone, the Chicago Marathon last year, when four men beat 2hr 8min; or Berlin, where Da Costa took the world record down to 2hr 6min 5sec; or the 1988 Rotterdam Marathon, with two men inside 2hr 7min 10sec. The London course may be marginally slower than some, but the size of the elite pack may counter the disadvantage.

Just as a 1-1 draw in football can be more entertaining than 3-2 win, a close marathon is often more memorable than a fast one. In that respect, there have been few marathons to compare with London two years ago, when Pinto beat Baldini in a sprint finish to the men's race, while Joyce Chepchumba, from Kenya, did the same to Liz McColgan in the women's.